THE

FEMALE MENTOR:

OR,

SELECT CONVERSATIONS.

VOLUME THE THIRD.

LONDON:

Printed for T. CADELL, jun. and W. DAVIES (Succeſſors to Mr. CADELL) in the Strand.

M. DCC. XCVI.

BRITISH MUSEUM

TO

ELIZABETH

BARONESS AMHERST,

THIS

THIRD VOLUME

OF THE

FEMALE MENTOR

IS

INSCRIBED,

AS

A TESTIMONY OF ESTEEM AND

GRATITUDE,

BY

HONORIA.

JUNE 30th,
1796.

CONTENTS.

Converſation		Page
30.	*ANNALS of the Poor* -	1
31.	*On the Fear of Death* -	9
32.	*On Vanity* - - -	31
33.	*On Politeneſs* - - -	43
34.	*On Covetouſneſs and Profuſion*	67
35.	*On the Rein-Deer* - -	80
36.	*On Genius and Induſtry* -	96
37.	*On Humane Inſtitutions* -	111
38.	*On Taſte* - - -	127

39. *On*

Converſation Page

39. *On Female Friendſhip* - - 146

40. *On Maternal Affection* - 160

41. *On Funeral Rites* - - 181

42. *On Simplicity* - - - 193

43. *Death of Amanda* - - 224

CON-

CONVERSATION 30.

"*The ſhort and ſimple Annals of the Poor.*"

GRAY.

AMANDA ſtill continuing in the Country was not unmindful of our Society, and ſent us ſome Obſervations, which were read by the Preſident.

'It is a common and illiberal topic of diſcourſe to depreciate human nature, and to affirm that gratitude and diſintereſtedneſs are ſeldom to be found in the lower claſs of people. I was always of a different opinion, and am convinced, that if the *ſimple Annals of the Poor* could be collected with the ſame eaſe as the annals of the rich, we

ſhould often diſcover as much magnanimity of mind, compaſſion, and gratitude, as in the more elevated ſtations. I am happy to lay before the ſociety ſome inſtances which have fallen under my particular obſervation. As I was airing towards Glouceſter, laſt ſummer, I was much ſurpriſed to obſerve a wooden leg in the hedge, and ſoon afterwards noticed a poor man, with only one leg, ſitting in the middle of the road, breaking ſtones for the uſe of the turnpike. On inquiring if the pariſh did not allow him ſomething for his ſupport, he told me, that ſince his accident he received from the overſeers a ſmall weekly ſtipend; but that as he had a large family to maintain, he had recourſe to the employment of breaking ſtones, and was determined never to beg, though he might obtain double the ſum which he earned by a laborious

ous occupation.—I applauded the man for his induſtry, gave him a trifle, and have recommended all my acquaintance who paſs that way, to watch for the wooden-leg in the hedge, and to throw the old man a gratuity.

'A daughter of this ſame induſtrious old man, whoſe name is Elizabeth, affords an inſtance of diſintereſted compaſſion which can ſcarcely be paralleled: A lady of ſome fortune, who about three years ago came from Bengal to reſide in England, took lodgings in Glouceſter, and hired Elizabeth for her ſervant. Having, either from accident or neglect, received no letters from her agent in Bengal, ſhe found herſelf in the greateſt diſtreſs, in a ſtrange country, and without a friend to whom ſhe could apply for aſſiſtance. During eighteen months no remittances were

made; ſhe could pay Elizabeth no wages; was frequently without food; and her ſituation was rendered ſingularly deplorable by a rheumatic complaint, which took away the uſe of her hands. Elizabeth went once a-day to her parents for her breakfaſt, which was often her only meal, and ſometimes obtained an egg from her mother that her miſtreſs might not periſh for want of ſuſtenance. Having called one day at her father's for her uſual meal, he was grieved to ſee her pale and emaciated; and as he found it difficult to maintain himſelf and the reſt of his family, inſiſted upon her leaving her place and ſeeking another ſervice: but the generous girl refuſed to part from her miſtreſs in her preſent diſtreſs. Her father, anxious for his daughter's intereſt, ſtill inſiſted; "You have no food," he ſaid, "you have no wages; you

are

are wearing out your clothes, and who will take you for a ſervant?" The girl ſtill perſiſting in her reſolution, her father added, "If you will not quit your place now, when I order you, you ſhall receive no further ſupport from me, and never enter my houſe again, whatever may be your diſtreſs." The generous girl burſt into tears, and replied, "Father! if you will ſhut your door againſt your child, you muſt: I cannot leave my poor miſtreſs, ſhe is unable to help herſelf, and if I deſert her, who will attend her!"—Elizabeth continued two months longer, ſtruggling under the ſame difficulties. Remittances were at length received from India; her miſtreſs then paid all her debts, and handſomely rewarded the girl for her diſintereſted humanity.

'I make no doubt you will be delighted with the amiable Elizabeth; and I ſhall conclude theſe Annals of the Poor, with an example of gratitude in a man-ſervant.

'In 1792, when the ſituation of the Royaliſts in France became deſperate, two brothers, officers of the emigrant army, made their eſcape after the battle of Jeemappe, and arrived at Amſterdam, attended by one domeſtic. They had only a ſmall pittance, ſufficient to purchaſe a loaf of bread, and to hire a lodging for a few nights, till they could deviſe ſome means for procuring their future ſubſiſtence. Being obliged to diſmiſs their ſervant La Chere, they expreſſed their reluctance to part with ſo faithful an attendant; and added, that as they could no longer provide for him, it was his intereſt to find

find another ſervice, where his merit might be rewarded. "No, my kind maſters," La Chere replied, "be aſſured that I will never leave you. You are not acquainted with any profeſſion, and are not accuſtomed to work: how then will you maintain yourſelves! I was brought up a ſhoemaker; and I truſt that, with the aſſiſtance of providence, I ſhall be able to ſupport you and myſelf." La Chere realized his kind intentions, and maintained them during ſix months, till they received ſome remittances from France, and were enabled to ſubſiſt without the aid of their faithful ſervant. La Chere again reſumed his former place, and declared that he would ſubmit to every hardſhip, but that of quitting their ſervice. The great and the affluent may pride themſelves upon the elegance of their enter-

tainments, their ſuite of domeſtics and coſtly equipages; theſe appurtenances of luxury are of little reſpect, unleſs the poſſeſſor has a heart diſpoſed to relieve the calamities of others. Elizabeth and La Chere ſoar above the unfeeling rich, as far as virtue ſoars above vice. Their benevolence was like the Widow's Mite: ſhe threw all ſhe had into the treaſury; and they, in giving their time and labour, gave all they had to beſtow.'

CONVERSATION 31.

On the Fear of Death.

" Plutôt ſouffrir que mourir,
" C'eſt la deviſe des hommes."

LA FONTAINE.

EUBULUS.—The earneſt deſire for the preſervation of life is ſo inherent in our nature, that few perſons could imitate the dying farmer, mentioned in one of Swift's Letters, who exclaimed, " If ever I get this raſcally breath out of my body, I will take care it never ſhall come in again."

The fable of the poor old man, tottering under his burden, and calling upon death to relieve him, is a natural repreſentation; but when death appeared to his ſummons, the love of life

life prevailed, and he was only anxious to be delivered from what he then deemed a greater evil than a miſerable exiſtence.

From general obſervation we may perceive, that moſt ſituations in life yield more pleaſure than pain; or at leaſt afford ſo much comfort, as to render exiſtence, upon the whole, deſirable; according to the ſentiments of Claudio in Meaſure for Meaſure:

"The wearieſt and moſt loathed worldly life,
"That age, ach, penury, impriſonment
"Can lay on nature, is a Paradiſe
"To what we fear of death."

I do not ſo much wonder, that a man who enjoys ſufficient health and proſperity to make life deſirable, ſhould dread being deprived of thoſe years which, according to the courſe of nature, he may expect to enjoy: but when

when I ſee the moſt deformed, and the moſt impotent of the human ſpecies, thoſe who are afflicted with the moſt painful complaints, thoſe who are on the verge of eternity, whoſe reliſh for enjoyments muſt be loſt, and who have ſurvived their friends and every thing that is valuable, ſtill regarding life, I reflect on their attachment to this world with aſtoniſhment; and can only conclude, that we are endowed by our Creator with a wiſh to preſerve our exiſtence.

"In conformity, Eubulus, to your opinion," Atticus obſerved, "Goldſmith in one of his Eſſays conſiders the love of life, as a paſſion ſtrongly imprinted in the human breaſt, and as increaſing inſtead of being diminiſhed by age." Then taking down Goldſmith's Eſſays, which happened to be among the books that formed our

little

little library, he added; but if you will give me leave, I will read the paſſage to which I allude.—"Age," ſays Goldſmith, "that leſſens the enjoyment of "life, augments the deſire of living. "Thoſe dangers which, in the vigour "of youth, we had learned to deſpiſe, "aſſume new terrors as we grow old. "Our caution increaſing as our years "increaſe, fear becomes at laſt the "prevailing paſſion of the mind; and "the ſmall remainder of life is taken "up in uſeleſs efforts to keep off our "end, or provide for a continued ex-"iſtence. Strange contradiction in "our nature, and to which even the "wiſe are liable: if I ſhould judge of "that part of life which lies before me, "by that which I have already ſeen, "the proſpect is hideous. Experience "tells me, that my paſt enjoyments "have brought no real felicity; and

"ſenſation

"ſenſation aſſures me, that thoſe I "have felt are ſtronger than thoſe "which are yet to come. Yet ex- "perience and ſenſation in vain per- "ſuade; hope, more powerful than "either, dreſſes out the diſtant proſ- "pect in fancied beauty; ſome happi- "neſs in long perſpective, ſtill beckons "me to purſue; and, like a loſing "gameſter, every new diſappointment "increaſes my ardour to continue in "the game."

"Whence then is this increaſed love "of life, which grows upon us with "our years? whence then does it ariſe, "that we thus make greater efforts to "preſerve our exiſtence, at a period "when it becomes ſcarce worth our "keeping? Is it that nature, attentive "to the preſervation of mankind, in- "creaſes our wiſhes to live, while ſhe "leſſens our enjoyments; and, as ſhe

"robs

" robs the ſenſes of every pleaſure,
" equips imagination in the ſpoils?
" Life would be inſupportable to an
" old man, who, loaded with infir-
" mities, feared death no more than
" when in the vigour of manhood;
" the numberleſs calamities of decay-
" ing nature, and the conſciouſneſs of
" ſurviving every pleaſure, would at
" once induce him to pray for a ter-
" mination of the ſcene of miſery: but
" happily the contempt of death for-
" ſakes him at a time when it could
" only be prejudicial; and life acquires
" an imaginary value, in proportion as
" its real value is no more. Our at-
" tachment to every object around us
" increaſes, in general, from the length
" of our acquaintance with it.

" I would not chooſe, ſays a French
" Philoſopher, to ſee an old poſt pulled
" up, with which I had been long ac-
" quainted.

"quainted. A mind long habituated
"to a certain ſet of objects, inſenſibly
"becomes fond of ſeeing them; viſits
"them from habit, and parts from
"them with reluctance. From hence
"proceeds the avarice of the old in
"every kind of poſſeſſion: They love
"the world, and all that it produces;
"they love life and all its advantages,
"not becauſe it gives them pleaſure,
"but becauſe they have known it
"long."

'I am obliged to you,' replied Eubulus, 'for bringing to my recollection this paſſage, which had always forcibly ſtruck me. It is intereſting to trace the opinion of Goldſmith upon this ſubject; a man whoſe literary abilities are ſo univerſally acknowledged, and whoſe benevolence rendered him beloved by all his acquaintance. But permit me to obſerve, that though

his arguments are ingenious, I confeſs that I do not think them perfectly juſt. I never could obſerve, that the longer we live, the more we expect to taſte true felicity. Our ſenſations at the decline of life are leſs acute; our expectations of happineſs, being frequently diſappointed, are almoſt annihilated, and our pleaſures more frequently ariſe from ſeeing other people happy, than from being happy ourſelves: A ſentiment beautifully expreſſed by the author of an Elegiac Epiſtle to a Friend, ſuppoſed to be written by Gay, when he laboured under a dejection of ſpirits.

" For why ſhould he who roves the dreary waſte
" Still joy on ev'ry ſide to view the gloom,
" Or when upon the couch of ſickneſs plac'd,
" Well pleas'd ſurvey a hapleſs neighbour's
" tomb."

" If

" If e'er a gleam of comfort glads my ſoul,
" If e'er my brow to wonted ſmiles unbends,
" 'Tis when the fleeting minutes as they roll,
" Can add one gleam of pleaſure to my
" friends."

But although I cannot join with Goldſmith in ſuppoſing that we form expectations of happineſs in the decline of life, yet I perfectly agree with his opinion, that we are more apprehenſive of death as we advance in years, than in the days of youth. This is the caſe even when we have not been particularly fortunate in the world, or enjoyed any extraordinary degree of felicity: This increaſe therefore of our attachment to life, muſt ariſe from our dread of altering the ſcene, and encountering greater evils than we have already experienced. It is evident that human nature frequently diſlikes change, even when that change may be apparently

advantageous. I heard the late Mr. Stanly ſay, who had been blind from the age of four years, that he would not ſuffer one hour's pain to recover his ſight; that he loſt the power of ſeeing ſo early in life, he did not remember the bleſſing of light; and were he to begin to ſee at the age of fifty, he ſhould have every thing to learn, and his ideas would be totally deranged. In 1785 I ſaw a man in confinement at Lyons, who had been impriſoned during the regency of the duke of Orleans: He had lately been offered his liberty, but had declined it, becauſe he had ſo long been accuſtomed to be within the precincts of the priſon, that the place had become habitual to him; and becauſe having been ſecluded from the world for ſuch a number of years, he had no friends with whom he could aſſociate.'

'The

'The anecdote you have juſt related,' interrupted Atticus, 'is extremely curious, and calculated to produce the moſt ſerious reflections; but inſtead of giving my own ſentiments, I ſhall again avail myſelf of Goldſmith, who juſtly obſerves,—"This paſſion for "confinement is ſimilar to that we "all have for life. We are habi- "tuated to the priſon; we look round "with diſcontent; are diſpleaſed with "the abode; and yet the length of "our captivity only increaſes our "fondneſs for the cell. The trees we "have planted, the houſes we have "built, or the children we have be- "gotten, all ſerve to bind us cloſer to "the earth, and embitter our parting. "Life ſues the young like a new ac- "quaintance. The companion, as yet "unexhauſted, is at once inſtructive "and amuſing; its company pleaſes;

"yet, for all this, it is but little re-
"garded. To us who are declined in
"years, life appears like an old friend;
"its jeſts have been anticipated in
"former converſation; it has no new
"ſtory to make us ſmile; yet deſti-
"tute of every enjoyment, ſtill we
"love it; huſband the waſting trea-
"ſure with increaſing frugality, and
"feel all the poignancy of anguiſh in
"the fatal ſeparation."

'Thus then, we have obſerved a blind man who did not wiſh to recover his ſight, and a confined perſon who dreaded his liberty; we may therefore infer, that habitual uſe becomes a ſecond nature; and may draw this concluſion, that the love of life is increaſed by long habit, and the apprehenſion of death can only be conquered by a noble exertion of the underſtanding.

'The obſervation of Goldſmith,' obſerved

ſerved Eubulus, 'and your additional remark, are perfectly juſt; but another reaſon, and in my opinion the moſt forcible, why we frequently fear death more in the decline than in the vigour of life, is, becauſe our faculties may be conſiderably weakened, and our very debility may render us leſs capable of exerting a neceſſary fortitude. At this tremendous moment it is not ſo much the dread of loſing life which cauſes our extreme concern, as the horror at the pains of dying, and the anxiety with which the ſtrongeſt mind muſt neceſſarily anticipate the proſpect of future happineſs or miſery. I lament that Goldſmith has afforded no conſolation againſt the hour of death, or given no friendly advice to arm us againſt the king of terrors: To endeavour to parry the blow is vain, but be able to meet

our inevitable deſtiny with compoſure, has been acquired by many, and ought to be the aim of all. The fortitude to which I allude, is not a raſh vain-glory, occaſioned by a ſtrong enthuſiaſm: a man may be excited by the ambition of wiſhing to immortalize his name, to perform heroic acts in the hour of danger; but if we could behold ſuch a character ſurprized by death, when no applauſe could be acquired, his conduct might be very different.

But there is a far greater incentive to raiſe us above the fear of death, than the deſire of earthly praiſe. Religion will alone inſpire us with that true fortitude, which, while it opens our expectation of a happier ſtate, enables us to encounter every danger. It has been ſaid, that men are chiefly diſtinguiſhed for active courage; and women for patient fortitude: this opi-

nion

nion has been confirmed by many phyſicians, who have acknowledged, that they perceived more true reſignation in women under the ſufferings of pain and diſeaſe, and at the awful approach of death, than in men. As a confirmation of this remark, I ſhall obſerve, that of all my acquaintance, one of the firſt characters for firmneſs and perfect compoſure under the moſt trying circumſtances, is Amanda, whoſe abſence we now regret.

'Among many inſtances of ſtrong fortitude, I ſhall relate one which ſhews that fear of death in her was ſubordinate to conjugal affection: About the year 1767, the powder mills at Hounſlow blew up, which occaſioned ſo violent a concuſſion, that it reſembled an earthquake. Amanda was at that time in the neighbourhood with her huſband, who was confined to his

chamber with the gout, and ſhe was in another apartment with her children. When the exploſion took place, ſhe immediately directed them to run into the garden, as the ſafeſt place: For herſelf, ſhe would attend her huſband, and ſhare her fate with him. On being convinced that there was no farther cauſe of apprehenſion, ſhe returned to her children, and perceiving one of her ſons greatly agitated, ſhe endeavoured to compoſe him, by aſſuring him there never had been any danger; but "let this circumſtance," ſhe added, "be a leſſon to you through life, to accuſtom yourſelf to think on death, and to conduct yourſelf in ſuch a manner, that when that event really happens, you may not be taken unprepared."

'As we have touched,' added Honoria, 'upon this intereſting but gloomy ſubject,

ſubject, I ſhall beg leave to conclude this evening's converſation by reading a tranſlation of the ſublime—

Hymn chanted by the Indians at the burial of the dead; from the Incas of Marmontel.

Man, thou art deſtined to labour, to trouble, and to grief; conſole thyſelf, for thou art mortal. In the morning thou riſeſt to feel thy inſufficiency, thou lieſt down at night; for death expects thee, and in his boſom is thy repoſe.

Thou ſeeſt a bark agitated by the tempeſt, it gains the peaceful road, and ſaves itſelf in the port. This ſea, without ceaſing beat with ſtorms, is life; this ſafe and tranquil port, where ſtorms never approach, is death.

Thou ſeeſt the timid infant, whom his mother has left at a diſtance, to try

his ſtrength; he runs to her with tottering ſteps; extending his trembling arms he arrives, he precipitates himſelf into her boſom, and no more feels his weakneſs: this infant is man, and this tender mother is death.

How weak art thou, oh man! during thy life thou art the ſlave of neceſſity, the ſport of fortune; death will break thy chains, thou ſhalt be free, and in the immenſity of eternity, thou wilt find a father, and a God.

Let this God, who animates the world, breathe, and it is life; let him retire, and it is death. Why is the rapidity of the breath of life aſtoniſhing, which paſſes in thy boſom, like the wind acroſs the foliage? Doſt thou wonder that the foliage has not detained the wind?

Thou haſt ſeen thy fellow creature expire, his convulſions have alarmed thee,

thee, and theſe efforts of pain thou attributed to death at the moment he ſeizes his prey. Death is inevitable; and upon the borders of the tomb the evils of life are accumulated; but beyond, is an eternal calm.

Doſt thou not find that time runs ſlowly? it is time that brings death, and that death is the term, to which nature, unquiet and impatient of the evils of life, extends. What man does not deſire to ſee to-morrow arrive, and this to-morrow is death?

Old age, which looſens all the ties of the ſoul, the inevitable alternative of decay or death; the calmneſs of ſleep, which is only a general oblivion of all that has paſſed; diſguſt, the painful ſentiment of a cold and ſlow exiſtence; they all diſpoſe us to invite, and habituate ourſelves to death.

Oh man! from whence comes then thy

thy repugnance to a bleſſing, to which thou art drawn by an inevitable deſcent? Is it that thou believeſt thyſelf wiſer than nature? better than the God who made thee? Is it that thou takeſt for an abyſs the darkneſs of futurity? And who would endure life, if the paſſage were leſs awful? Nature intimidates us, for the purpoſe of retaining us. She has hollowed a profound cavern upon the confines of life and death, for fear of deſertion.

If God were deſirous of throwing man into deſperation, he would condemn him never to die. Diſguſt and melancholy would afflict his ſoul at the neceſſity of living; the ſign of reconciliation between heaven and man is death.

There is only one means of rendering life more precious than even death, it is to live for our country, faithful to

its

its worſhip; to its laws; uſeful to its proſperity; worthy of its acknowledgments; and to be able to ſay, in dying, "I have only breathed for my coun-"try; it ſhall have my laſt ſigh."

'This hymn,' ſaid Eubulus, 'is undoubtedly very beautiful, when we conſider that the ſentiments are expreſſed by an ignorant Indian; and yet it falls infinitely ſhort of the ſublime ideas of chriſtianity. The Indian's only conſolation in dying is, that a long life is not deſirable, but full of miſery, and he therefore rejoices that death cloſes his troubles. But the chriſtian, by looking forward to a happier ſtate, is ſupported during the painful ſtruggle of leaving this world by the comfortable precepts delivered in the Goſpel; and as our converſation this evening has been of a ſerious tendency, I truſt I

ſhall

ſhall not be deemed to trifle with religious ſubjects, or introduce parts of ſcripture improperly, if I conclude with this animating paſſage in the burial ſervice—"*I am the reſurrection* "*and the life, ſaith the Lord: he that* "*believeth in me, though he were dead,* "*yet ſhall he live; and whoſoever be-* "*lieveth in me, ſhall never die.*"

CON-

CONVERSATION 32.

On Vanity.

AMANDA being returned from her excurſion, gladdened the Society with her preſence, and opened the Converſation with a few remarks upon Vanity. 'I am more eaſily led,' ſhe ſaid, 'into this ſubject, from having obſerved, during my abſence, that vanity is leſs an inhabitant of the country, than of the town; and that as it is certainly a caricature, I wiſh it was baniſhed from all ſociety. Vanity is frequently denominated an excuſable weakneſs, becauſe it is often ſuppoſed to ariſe from an emulation to obtain pre-eminence of character, without which few would acquire excellence in any ſituation of life;

life; and is not unfrequently miſtaken for ambition; and yet ambition and vanity are perfectly diſtinct; the one, when well regulated, and derived from a deſire of gaining fame by a meritorious conduct, is highly laudable; the other muſt always appear deſpicable in its aim; for vanity prefers the ſemblance to the reality and oftener apes, rather than obtains the virtue which it profeſſes to admire. I ſhould be concerned, if I were to appear too ſatyrical againſt my own ſex; but I am not apprehenſive of being contradicted, when I affirm, that vanity is more the foible of women, than of men. Indeed, I muſt allow, that there are many elegancies of faſhion in dreſs and manners, attended perhaps with the appearance of vanity, which are adopted by young and beautiful females, which none but faſtidious

perſons

perſons would condemn; yet when awkward, plain, or elderly perſons copy theſe trifles, they appear abſurd and ridiculous. How pleaſing is the girl of eighteen, with her ſtraw hat negligently placed on one ſide; but when wrinkles ſucceed to dimples, this mode of dreſs is totally out of character:

" Walk ſober off, before a ſprightlier age
" Comes titt'ring on, and ſhoves you from the
" ſtage:
" Leave ſuch to triſle with more grace and eaſe,
" Whom folly pleaſes, and whoſe follies pleaſe."

POPE's Eſſay.

" Theſe little inſtances of weakneſs, however, are only worthy of ridicule. But vanity becomes truly culpable, when it excites jealouſy or creates envy among the cloſeſt and deareſt connections. Araminta has four daughters, whom ſhe kept at ſchool, as par-

lour-boarders, till they were ſo old as to be frequently taken for aſſiſtants to the miſtreſs. She has ſince ſuffered them to wither away at an old aunt's in the country, under pretence of preparing them before they enter into a world full of dangers which they are never to encounter, temptations which they are never to experience, and rocks which they are not likely to ſplit upon. She is ſo ſtartled at the very idea of being a grandmother, that ſhe will not hear of offers for any of them; and ſhe never intends to ſettle their wedding portions, but in her laſt will and teſtament.'

'But if the deſire of admiration,' obſerved Flavia, 'does not interfere with our neareſt connections, we ſhould, for our own ſakes, be always upon our guard not to indulge ourſelves in this diſpoſition, as the conſequences

quences may be fatal to our morals. I was in company yeſterday afternoon with a young, elegant woman, who, not ſatisfied with the voluntary approbation which is always paid to beauty, when accompanied with an unaſſuming demeanour, ſhewed an extraordinary eagerneſs to attract the notice of the company, by the greateſt ſingularity in her dreſs, by throwing herſelf into all ſorts of attitudes, and uſing various artifices to diſplay her perſonal charms. From her appearance ſhe might have given cauſe for a ſuppoſition, to thoſe who did not know her, that ſhe was not a woman of the moſt exemplary character:—

"Let angel forms angelic truth maintain,
"Nature diſjoins the *beauteous* and *profane*.
"For what's true beauty, but fair Virtue's face?
"Virtue made *viſible* in outward grace?

"She, then, that's haunted with an impious
"mind,
"The more ſhe charms, the more ſhe *ſhocks*
"mankind.*"

'Felebien, in his Lives of the Painters, mentions, that Cleſides, a celebrated painter, who went to the court of Antiochus, king of Syria, was ſo offended at queen Stratonice for not receiving him with ſuch marks of approbation as he thought he merited, that he repreſented her as Thompſon deſcribes Muſidora going to bathe—

"She ſtript her beauteous limbs
"To taſte the lucid coolneſs of the flood."

But not like her;

"Yet unbeheld, ſave by the ſacred eye
"Of faithful love:"

For Cleſides expoſed Stratonice's portrait to public view, and then made

* YOUNG's Love of Fame, Sat. IV.

his

his escape in a vessel which was ready to put to sea. The Queen, however, was not greatly displeased; for although the picture was highly injurious to female delicacy, yet she was represented as so extremely beautiful, that she rather chose that her character should be impeached, than that her charms should not be transmitted to posterity. Thus, Felebien remarks, "The generality "of women are so desirous of being "thought handsome, that, provided "they are flattered in this particular, "they forget all other injuries."

'The same dangerous vanity,' resumed Amanda, 'which urges a woman to depart from propriety in her actions, leads her also to adopt any method, however dangerous to her health, or full of deception, which she thinks will add to her charms. To this desire of ap-

pearing handſome may be attributed the uſe of white paint.'—'I have frequently been deſirous,' obſerved Eubulus, 'of repreſenting the miſeries to which young women ignorantly expoſe themſelves by employing white paint. I learnt the proceſs of making this deſtructive compoſition from a phyſician, who has often witneſſed its fatal effects. White paint is made by diſſolving biſmuth (a kind of metal, not unlike lead) in aqua fortis, which is precipitated by an alkali into a white powder; it is rubbed upon the ſkin, at firſt gives a moſt beautiful gloſs, ſo that the veins are diſcovered through it, but by frequent uſe the natural colour is totally concealed. As the precipitated powder cannot be cleanſed from the aqua-fortis, the remains of this pernicious acid corrodes the ſkin; it is, therefore,

ſcarcely

ſcarcely poſſible to diſcontinue it when once adopted. By ſtopping up the pores, this powder occaſions an almoſt perpetual itching, which cannot be allayed, becauſe the unhappy ſufferers are afraid of diſcompoſing their artificial complexion; and by checking the inſenſible perſpiration of the face, neck, and hands, cauſes inflamed eyes, and many other dreadful diſorders. In order to leſſen theſe baneful effects, frequent recourſe muſt be had to mercurial medicines. Thoſe who have long uſed it often become paralytic, and few eſcape a lingering and premature death. I have obſerved in the news-papers advertiſements recommending the uſe of various coſmetics, in which the venders boaſt that they are compoſed of vegetables, without the mixture of any mineral ſubſtance; but I am informed from an able

chymiſt, that it is impoſſible to make any compoſition which ſhall give the appearance of a fair complexion, without the aid of a mineral ſubſtance; and that it is equally impoſſible to diſſolve any mineral ſo as to be precipitated into a powder otherwiſe than by a ſolution in aqua-fortis, or one of the mineral acids. Theſe coſmetics all contain a greater or leſs quantity of this white powder, mixed with ſome liquid. Thoſe, therefore, my young friends, who pretend that theſe waſhes for the improvement of the complexion are harmleſs, groſsly deceive you; and you may be aſſured, that thoſe who have recourſe to ſuch artificial aid uſually end in the uſe of white paint.'

'This account of the injury which the conſtitution receives from white paint,' remarked Honoria, 'reminds

me

me of a young lady who went into a perfumer's ſhop: her complexion being dark, the perfumer was very deſirous of perſuading her to uſe a coſmetic, prepared by himſelf, and with repeated aſſeverations declared, that it was perfectly innocent. His child, a lovely infant, was playing upon the counter—"If it is ſo inno-"cent," ſaid the young lady, "let me "ſee you waſh this child's face with it, "and then perhaps I may become a "purchaſer." The man conſidered a moment, and anſwered, "No, madam, "I love my child too well."

'From the anecdotes which have been related,' Amanda concluded, 'I truſt my young friends will be convinced, that vanity is not to be looked upon merely as an excuſable weakneſs, but if ſuffered to gain an aſcendency

over

over the mind, may be considered as productive of the most dangerous consequences, as it may lead to the loss of our health, and to the destruction of our morals.'

CONVERSATION 33.

On Politeneſs.

On the Breaches of Politeneſs, exemplified in Plain Dealing, the Deſire of ſhining in Converſation, and an Affectation of Singularity, with a Tale adapted to the Subject.

" Mais je tiens, qu'il eſt mal, ſur quoi que l'on ſe fonde
" De fuir obſtinement, ce que ſuit tout le monde."

MOLIERE.

'WHEN we obſerve,' ſaid Eubulus, 'the infinite variety of whims, caprices, and humours which influence the conduct of mankind in every age and nation, we may readily conceive, that this diverſity in our diſpoſitions muſt frequently create ill-will, ſince every man not only *differs* from his neighbour, but often from himſelf, as he is actuated by external contingencies, or borne away

away by the fancies of his own wayward imagination. To render ſociety agreeable, it is neceſſary that this motley character of our nature ſhould be prevented from degenerating into moroſeneſs, and ſhould be accompanied with a mutual toleration of our ſeveral imperfections. In civilized nations this complacency is conſidered as a very neceſſary acquirement, is aptly ſtyled *politeneſs*, and is an accompliſhment equally remote from petulance and ſervility. Hence ariſes a becoming reſpect for the opinions of others; and hence all violent contradiction and obſtinate zeal in ſupporting our own favourite maxims give way to diſcretion and gentleneſs. Without this ſpecies of politeneſs, virtue, though it will command reſpect, cannot raiſe affection; and even vice itſelf, when accompanied

companied by condeſcending and gracious manners, will ſometimes appear amiable.

'Ruſticus, with the beſt of diſpoſitions, has the moſt ungracious manner; he is guilty of repeated incivilities; his tongue and his heart ſeldom ſeem in alliance; for while he impreſſes us with an idea of his rudeneſs and inhumanity, he is at the ſame time friendly, benevolent, and incapable of injuring the meaneſt individual. Urbanus, on the contrary, is apparently well tempered and eaſy in his deportment, yet he is illiberal, treacherous, and cruel; he has ſeldom uttered an unkind expreſſion, but he has done a thouſand illnatured things. How unfortunate it is, that the uncouth addreſs of Ruſticus ſhould conceal the goodneſs of his heart; and that the affability and eaſe of Urbanus ſhould caſt a veil over his defects!

'So

'So much has been ſaid and written upon politeneſs, that it may ſeem needleſs to enlarge any further upon its excellence; I ſhall, therefore, endeavour to define it, like the character of Beau Didapper in Joſeph Andrews, by negatives, and ſhew what is not politeneſs, by laying before the young members of this ſociety certain modes of behaviour diametrically oppoſite to the true ſpirit of this accompliſhment; and, in drawing theſe remarks, I ſhall confine myſelf to three principal defects; Plain Dealing, the Deſire of ſhining in Converſation, and an Affectation of Singularity.

'There is no man who offends ſo much againſt politeneſs as he who, in contradicting the opinion of others, clothes himſelf with the garb of ſincerity and plain dealing, and, under the

pretence of a hatred to diſſimulation, openly adopts a freedom of ſpeech, and profeſſes never to conceal his real ſentiments. But does it not uſually happen, that the man who calls himſelf a plain dealer, while he never oppoſes his own inclinations, pays no regard to the opinions and ſentiments of others, and condemns what he does not approve with a bluntneſs which never fails to diſguſt? Surely there is an eſſential difference between defending an opinion with modeſty and good breeding, and enforcing it with poſitive contradiction, which generally ſprings from pride, and is always attended with haughtineſs and ſelf-ſufficiency: he may, probably, be in the right; but even upon that ſuppoſition he is to blame in being thus vehement, as truth requires not a boiſterous officiouſneſs to diſplay its value, but is rather weakened

by

by ſuch intemperate advocates. This obſtinate oppoſition is palliated with the appellation of plain dealing; and this defiance of all rules of politeneſs is dignified with the title of ſincerity, as if names could alter the eſſence of things, and render moroſeneſs agreeable, and churliſhneſs reſpectable.

'Another great defect in converſation, which, it muſt be confeſſed, often ariſes from a good principle, an endeavour of rendering ourſelves agreeable, proceeds from a deſire of ſhining. But does it not as frequently proceed from an eagerneſs to become conſpicuous? Perſons of this character would perſuade us, that none but themſelves can afford amuſement; and they call this tyranny, a deſire to pleaſe. Converſation ſhould reſemble a commercial city, where the port is open to all the inhabitants. We are, therefore,

guilty

guilty of great injuſtice, as well as folly, if we lay a reſtriction upon all merchandize but our own, and ſuppoſe this embargo of ſervice to the community. Garrulus has a good underſtanding, profound erudition, and general information; and his company would be courted, were he not ſo ambitious of engroſſing the whole converſation. I have known him deſcant for a conſiderable time on ſome particular topic, with great ſucceſs; and when he had exhauſted the ſubject, inſtead of ſuffering any of the company to offer objections, or take up the argument, "I "will now," added he, "tell you what "you will naturally anſwer to all I have "been ſaying." I never entered his company, but I found myſelf faſcinated with his manners, entertained with his vivacity, and inſtructed by his knowledge; I never left it, without being

diſguſted with his unceaſing efforts to diſplay his abilities; wondering, that a man with his powers to pleaſe, ſhould deſtroy the effect by the very means he took to ſet them off to the beſt advantage.

'Under this head of a deſire to ſhine, we may range the troubleſome race of eternal ſtory-tellers. I mean, ſtory-tellers by profeſſion. Theſe men are always upon the watch to introduce a favourite anecdote, or ſome narrative, in the relation of which they fancy that they excel. Honeſt Montaigne, cenſuring the frequent repetitions of which theſe talkers are guilty, adds, with much humour,—"Certains parleurs, à qui la "ſouvenance des choſes paſſées de-"meure, mais qui ont perdu le ſouvenir "de leurs redites."

'Under this head may alſo be ranked the pedantry of profeſſion, by which a man

man is led to talk upon ſubjects of which the reſt of the company are totally ignorant. Thus, hunting and ſhooting, with all the technical terms which belong to theſe diverſions, are frequently introduced to the utter ſecluſion of every other ſubject; and the country ſquire is as much a pedant, when all his diſcourſe turns upon horſes and dogs, as the lawyer when he is continually commenting on his briefs, or the philoſopher on his books and learning. This may be called, the pedantry of profeſſion, and is the greateſt enemy to freedom of converſation. The fine gentleman, who can diſcourſe of nothing but his engagements, his perſon, and his dreſs, is a pedant in every eſtimation of the word; his occupation is never extended beyond the choice of a new coat, the faſhion of his equipage, and his attendance to

the opera. Take him out of the circle of his engagements: converſe with him upon his duties as a man, and as a free agent, he is perfectly at a loſs, and cannot comprehend you; engaged in the circle of diſſipation, he has no idea beyond his profeſſion. There are alſo many of the fair ſex, whoſe profeſſion is centred in a box of rouge, and in the choice of ribbons; who talk of this year's faſhionable robe, and the ſtile of dreſſing the hair, with all the preciſion of a mantua-maker, or the inſignificance of a hair-dreſſer. But change the ſubject, mention the duties of a wife, and the affection of a parent, they ſtare you in the face, and wonder at your abſurdity in intruding ſuch topics into faſhionable ſociety.

'A third defect againſt politeneſs, is the affectation of ſingularity. Moliere has wiſely obſerved—

"Toujours

" Toujours au plus grand nombre on doit
" s'accommoder
" Et jamais il ne faut ſe faire regarder."

'It is recorded that Plato, obſerving Diogenes in the midſt of a river which was almoſt frozen, turning to his diſciples, ſaid—" Take no notice of " Diogenes, and he will ſpeedily retire " from his preſent ſituation. He ſaw " us at ſome diſtance, and the deſire " of fixing our attention upon him, " is the ſole motive for his preſent " behaviour; it is vanity alone which " influences his conduct." We may extend this obſervation of Plato, and affirm in general, that vanity is the parent of ſingularity. It is a ſure ſign of a weak head, or a perverted underſtanding, when any one intentionally puſhes himſelf forward as an object of conſideration, and affects to deviate from all the world, even in

points of no conſequence. If men will dine when other people breakfaſt, ſit up when others retire to reſt, continually aſſert ſingular opinions, or tire their companions with abſent and capricious behaviour, they will become the objects of contempt or averſion.

But inſtead of continuing any further remarks on thoſe foibles which, under the appellation of plain dealing, of a deſire of ſhining in converſation, and an affectation of ſingularity, deſtroy the comforts of ſociety, and offend againſt politeneſs, I ſhall relate a little tale, extracted from an anonymous French author, which, I truſt, will not be thought inapplicable to the preſent ſubject.

"An Enchanter, diſguſted with hearing men condemn defects in others, whilſt they overlooked the ſame failings in themſelves, adopted an expedient

which

which might lead each perſon to correct himſelf. The Enchanter retired to an iſland, and proclaimed, that all thoſe who were deſirous to reſide there, ſhould be at liberty to follow their own inclinations, and ſuffer no injuſtice in their intercourſe with the inhabitants. This invitation was no ſooner divulged, than three viſitors arrived. "You "demand," ſaid the Enchanter, "the "right of citizens; I ſhall immediately "grant it to you upon the following "condition: Let each of you men-"tion his particular character, to be "enrolled in the liſt of the iſlanders, "and from that moment you may live "here, as beſt ſuits your ſeveral diſ-"poſitions." The firſt, whoſe name was Almon, ſaid, "I follow nature, I am a plain dealer, and abhor diſſimulation:" They wrote down, "*Almon is a Plain dealer.*"—"As for me,"

me," ſaid the ſecond, whoſe name was Alibeg, "I love to pleaſe, and to "render myſelf agreeable to others:" They wrote, "*Alibeg loves to pleaſe.*" —"I will readily acknowledge," ſaid the third, "that I am extremely ſingular:" They wrote, "*Zamis is ſingular.*" — "You will now," replied the Enchanter, "follow that "kind of life which is moſt ſuitable "to your ſeparate characters, without "conſtraint: retire into the habitation "which is deſigned for your recep-"tion."

When they had departed, the Enchanter addreſſed himſelf to his courtiers: "Did you obſerve with what "confidence theſe three men imagined "that they deſcribed their ſeveral "characters; we ſhall eaſily diſcern "their true portraits, and let us enjoy, "without their knowledge, their aſto-

"niſhment

"niſhment at their new ſituation." The Enchanter and his friends then became inviſible. Almon obſerved a magnificent palace, at the front of which was inſcribed, "*Every one is in the right.*"

He entered with aſtoniſhment; and as he advanced, heard the ſound of divers inſtruments of muſic: the ſound ceaſed, the doors of a ſaloon were thrown open, and two heralds conducted him to an inner apartment.—Almon entered, his heart expanding with delight and expectation at the freedom and eaſe which he expected to find in this palace, where every one was in the right. He obſerved a large aſſembly of men and women, who, by their countenances, their occupations, and their diſcourſe, ſeemed to conſider themſelves alone. One was abſorbed in thought, another danced, a third talked, and was not attended to; one

woman

woman was examining herſelf in a mirror, and making the moſt rapturous encomiums upon her perſonal charms; here one exclaimed, "I have an infinite fund of wit," there another, "I am a divine creature;" in a word, it was a numerous collection of people without any ſociety, all ſatisfied with their own attainments, and diſregarding thoſe of others. Alcanor, ſeated upon a throne, payed no more attention to the company, than the company did to him. In a ſhort time he was ſurrounded by a circle, when all talked at once, and all were as ſuddenly ſilent. Almon, who had been obſerved by no one, ſeated himſelf by Alcanor, when the converſation at length turned upon the praiſe of politeneſs—"If you were to define," ſaid Almon, "the politeneſs of the inhabitants of this iſland, the converſation would ſoon be at an end."

end." "I ſhould be extremely uneaſy to prevent you from thinking as you pleaſe," Alcanor anſwered with an air of contempt, "but I hate diſſimulation; I will own to you, that your opinion appears void of common ſenſe, judgment, and reaſon. Politeneſs conſiſts in certain cuſtoms and ſettled forms, and you ſeem ignorant of our's."—"I ſhall moſt willingly remain ignorant," continued Almon, "unleſs from your example, I am induced to reply in the ſame diſobliging manner."—At theſe words the Enchanter made his appearance. "What an inſupportable liberty," cried Almon, "reigns in this iſland; you promiſed me, that I ſhould find no injuſtice among your ſubjects."—"Doubtleſs," anſwered the Enchanter, "it is you who are unjuſt. You declared that you were a plain dealer; I approve of your character, but do

you

you think to have an exclusive privilege; know, that this is the character of all the inhabitants: have you any right to complain of persons that resemble you? Let me entreat you then to relinquish your error, and be instructed from the scene which has now given you so much uneasiness. No society could be supported, if men shewed themselves exactly as they are; no one ought to indulge himself in the liberty of abandoning himself to his natural disposition, except that natural disposition agrees with the virtues which cement society."—"I see my folly," replied Almon; "I am struck with the truth of what you advance, and will readily remain here till I have conquered this defect in my behaviour."—"I will now "answer for your recovery," continued the Enchanter, "without any more

"proofs

" proofs of my art: with a good under-
" ſtanding and a real deſire of becoming
" agreeable, ſuch foibles are ſoon cor-
" rected.—But come and be a witneſs to
" the adventures of your companions,
" they will give you further inſtruc-
" tion."

" At the concluſion of theſe words they were tranſported to the aſſembly of wits, where Alibeg had been juſt introduced. He was no ſooner ſeated than he immediately ſeized upon the converſation: opened the whole fund of his knowledge, diſplayed the brilliancy of his wit, talked of himſelf and his accompliſhments, as if there was no merit in the world but his own, and as if the abilities of others were only worthy to pay a perpetual homage to him, the idol of his own adoration. The company at firſt enjoyed a ſecret pleaſure in increaſing

the pride of Alibeg, and feeding his ridiculous vanity, but reſolved to make him feel the extravagance of his conduct. On a ſudden they altered their behaviour. Alibeg began the recital of a very ſingular adventure, he was interrupted by one of the company who related a moſt extraordinary dream. Impatient at this interruption, he propoſed to read an excellent copy of verſes; at the mention of verſes a perſon immediately repeated ſome of his own, and Alibeg was reduced to the diſagreeable neceſſity of liſtening, or at leaſt to the vexation of being ſilent. He now felt the luſtre of abilities which perſecuted him, becauſe they gained applauſe, and no opportunity occurred of diſplaying his own talents. He could not ſupport his uneaſineſs any longer, but retired full of indignation at the little deference

which

which was paid to the merit and accompliſhments of a ſtranger. He went to the Enchanter and poured forth the bitterneſs of his heart: in anſwer to his complaints, he was preſented with the book in which his character was deſcribed. "Alibeg in his own opinion *loves to pleaſe.*" Alibeg in reality *wiſhes only to ſhine.* He viewed the book, caſt an eye of pity upon the Enchanter, and retired from the iſland. "He is gone," reſumed the Enchanter, "more "incorrigible than ever—ſome know-"ledge, a variety of moderate talents, "and a tolerable ſhare of underſtanding, "are perverted by vanity, and produce "a character completely deſpicable."

There remained now only to obſerve the conduct of Zamis. In paſſing along an open ſquare a number of men, whimſically dreſſed, ſurrounded him, and perſuaded him to aſcend into

into a car. "We acknowledge your merit," ſaid one of the multitude, "you are worthy of a triumph." They conducted him to a temple, where there was a large concourſe of people; Zamis entered with a firm reſolution of being more ſingular than ever; an affected demeanour, extravagant diſcourſe, every conceit was employed and paſſed without obſervation; he perceived that far from ſurpriſing any one, he was conſidered only as an ordinary character. This obſervation filled him with vexation. His embarraſſment increaſed, he continued to exaggerate, and was not regarded; when one of the party advanced ſuch forced conceits, and ſuch wild ſuppoſitions, that Zamis was reduced to own himſelf conſiſtent and reaſonable. At length he retired with indignation upon hearing himſelf commended for the *pro-*

priety

priety of his *underſtanding*, and the coolneſs of his imagination; he paused, he meditated, and was filled with vexation. Vexed with the uneaſineſs he ſuffered from the whim and caprice of theſe iſlanders, he flew to the enchanter; "ſuffer me to depart," he exclaimed, "for your ſubjects paſs for extraordinary characters, whereas they are contradictory, capricious, and inconſiſtent." 'You have juſt drawn their portrait and your own,' replied the enchanter; 'inſtead of boaſting with oſtentation that you are ſingular, why do you not confeſs that you wiſhed to appear ſo: they are two characters totally different. Thoſe who are naturally ſingular, are ſometimes agreeable to ſociety; whereas he who ſtudies ſingularity ſoon tranſgreſſes the bounds of propriety, begins with creating diſguſt, and finiſhes with being in-

ſupportable. But I was willing to undeceive, and not to puniſh you. Return both of you to your own country, and never forget, that qualities which are diſpleaſing ought to be concealed, and that the ambition of being extraordinary leads inſenſibly to folly.'

BRITISH MUSEUM 2 NOV 71

CONVERSATION 34.

On Covetouſneſs and Profuſion.

FLAVIA—As the greateſt perfection of human nature ariſes from an enlarged and exalted ſyſtem of benevolence, to depreſs that expanſion of ſoul, and to confine our exertions within the ſmall circle of ſelf-intereſt, is to act in direct oppoſition to the ends of our creation, and to fruſtrate the kind intentions of Providence, who has emplanted in us beneficent feelings as the greateſt bleſſing which could be conferred on the human race. Covetouſneſs deadens theſe genial feelings, renders the diſpoſition rough and rugged, and comprehends not that the com-

munication of our happineſs enlarges the ſphere of our own felicity. As every beneficent action may be ſaid to improve and exalt our nature, ſo does every ſordid action draw us further and further from virtue and happineſs. As the covetous man is ever jealous and watchful, and from the experience of his own bad qualities, loads mankind with the moſt ungenerous ſuſpicions; conſequently, he is unacquainted with thoſe endearing pleaſures which are derived from acts of charity. This is the conſequence of covetouſneſs, and in this its deformity is moſt ſtriking and conſpicuous.

'I have been led,' continued Flavia, 'into this train of reflection, from reading the life of the late Mr. Elwes, a man of unblemiſhed integrity, but who had unfortunately arrived to ſuch an extraordinary degree of parſimony, that few ſimilar examples can be

given: his treatment of his old faithful ſervant excites my particular indignation. Scrub in the Beaux Stratagem, who on Monday drove the coach, on Tueſday drove the plough, on Wedneſday followed the hounds, on Thurſday dunned the tenants, on Friday went to market, on Saturday made out warrants, and on Sunday drew beer, contraſted with Mr. Elwes' huntſman, muſt be termed an idle domeſtic. Thomas uſually roſe at four o'clock in the morning, during the hunting ſeaſon; milked the cows, and prepared breakfaſt; then, ſlipping on a green coat, he hurried into the ſtable, ſaddled the horſes, collected the hounds, and attended his maſter into the field. At his return, inſtead of refreſhing himſelf after the fatigues of the chace, he haſtily rubbed down the horſes; then, running into the houſe, laid the cloth,

waited at dinner, hurried again into the ſtable, fed the horſes and dogs, milked the cows, and ſpread the litter for eight horſes before the duties of the day were completed. It may appear rather extraordinary, that any man ſhould be able and willing to perform this drudgery for ſeveral years, and yet Mr. Elwes was frequently heard to ſay, that this poor fellow was an idle dog, and wanted to be paid for doing nothing. This indefatigable ſervant died as he was following his maſter on a journey into Berkſhire upon a hard trotting horſe; and he died empty and poor; for his yearly wages were only four pounds, and he had faſted the whole day on which he expired. It may juſtly be obſerved, that he was worthy of a better fate.'

'I do not wonder,' ſaid Atticus, 'at your indignation at this, and many other

other inſtances of covetouſneſs in Mr. Elwes. He was a man of a very inconſiſtent character; he has been known to do generous actions occaſionally, but in this inſtance, he tranſgreſſed the obvious duties of humanity. Yet, however covetouſneſs is to be abhorred, I am of opinion, that this vice, with all its enormities, does leſs evil in the world, than a liberality which degenerates into profuſion.'—'Your aſſertion is ſingular,' replied Flavia, 'but we know that you delight in making extraordinary obſervations, and have experienced, that you not unfrequently ſucceed in ſupporting them. Let us hear, then, in what manner you will ſupport your preſent argument, and prove that liberality, though attended with profuſion, is often more detrimental to ſociety than covetouſneſs.'

'After the keen ſatire,' reſumed Atticus, 'which Eubulus directed at our laſt meeting, againſt the affectation of ſingularity, I am not willing to be conſidered as a ſingular man, or a ſupporter of paradoxes; yet I think that it will not be difficult to maintain the opinion which I have juſt advanced, without ſubjecting myſelf to the penalty of being ſent to the enchanter's iſland.

'There are few things which may not admit of a double interpretation, and be conſidered in two diſtinct points of view. Extremes are ſaid to touch each other; exceſs of light will be found to produce darkneſs, as Milton has finely expreſſed himſelf—

"Dark with exceſs of light his ſkirts appear."

Joy and grief produce tears. There is, perhaps, ſcarcely a virtue which, if

if indulged to exceſs, does not become an imperfection; and ſome failings may be apparently modified into virtues. Thus when liberality exceeds the bounds of juſtice, it becomes profuſion, and often occaſions much diſtreſs; while covetouſneſs, by a parity of argument, may almoſt be converted into prudence, and, at leaſt, is productive of evil only to the penurious themſelves. The covetous man, though a ſtranger to every ſocial affection, and unworthy of the bounty of heaven, is rather a partial than a general cauſe of complaint, a negative friend, rather than an active foe to ſociety: for where happineſs has never been communicated, its privation can never be felt. Whereas the profuſely generous or extravagant man, firſt ruins himſelf, and then implicates others by tempting them to follow his bad example;

ſpreads

spreads his contagion till whole communities are involved in one common misery, and is infinitely more hurtful than the covetous character, as he wears a specious appearance, and may beguile the young and unwary by the semblance of virtue. The miser is shunned because no person can be comforted, relieved, or pleased in his society; but the falsely called liberal man, captivates the heart of the generous youth, lulls the prudence of mature age, is at the same time ruining his dependants, and entailing poverty and wretchedness upon his family—has any covetous man ever occasioned such calamities to his fellow-creatures? The extravagant man forgets the proverb, "First, be just; then, be charitable; and, if you can, be generous." This excellent maxim is ridiculed in the School for Scandal:

Charles,

Charles, inſtead of paying one hundred pounds which is due to his tradeſmen, gives it to his friend Stanley, and ſays, "Juſtice is an old, lame, hobling bel-"dam, and I can't get her to keep "pace with generoſity for the ſoul of "me." The galleries ſeldom fail to applaud this ſentiment, though it is juſtly reprobated by the rational and reflecting mind.'

'Every one muſt approve,' ſaid Honoria, 'what you advance in regard to the miſchiefs ariſing from profuſion; and though I cannot entirely agree with you, when you endeavour to prove that covetouſneſs may be converted into a virtue; yet I allow that a man may appear covetous who is not really ſo; for we are too apt to eſtimate characters according to external appearances. Some gentlemen, deſirous of raiſing a collection for the inhabitants

inhabitants of a village which had been nearly deſtroyed by fire, ſolicited contributions. On approaching the houſe of an elderly merchant of moderate fortune, it was thought unneceſſary to requeſt aid from a man whoſe character for parſimony did not leave the ſmalleſt hopes of ſucceſs. But this opinion being over-ruled, from a conviction that no opportunity of ſeeking relief on ſo urgent an occaſion ought to be omitted, they made their application, and were aſtoniſhed on receiving a donation of a hundred pounds. "I perceive your aſtoniſhment," ſaid the merchant, "and am not ſurprized "at it. For though I may be thought "penurious, I truſt I am not ſo in "reality: the fact is, I never ſpend "any money in *'tis buts*. When I am "requeſted to purchaſe uſeleſs trifles, "or ſquander away ſmall ſums becauſe

"*'tis*

"'tis *but ſo much*, I conſtantly refuſe; "and by this method I am enabled to "aſſiſt real objects of charity."

'Though I cannot,' reſumed Flavia, 'relinquiſh my original aſſertion, yet I am very ready to admit, from the arguments of Atticus, and the anecdote related by Honoria, that even parſimony may be attended with great advantages; and that profuſion, though leſs baneful in its appearances, is often more prejudicial in its effects. Many inſtances daily occur of children, who have been bred up in elegance and luxury, when the death of their father has ſuddenly reduced them to all the horrors of poverty! The firſt duty of a father is, undoubtedly, to provide for his family; but how can he perform that eſſential duty, if he is extravagantly profuſe: his children's miſery is heightened by the reflection

of

of their former affluence, and they may ſay with Jaffier—

" There's not a wretch that lives on common
" charity
" But's happier than me, for I have known
" The luſcious ſweets of plenty: every night
" Have ſlept with ſoft content about my head,
" And never wak'd but to a joyful morning.
" Yet now muſt fall like a full ear of corn
" Whoſe bloſſom 'ſcap'd, yet's wither'd in the
" ripening."

Venice Preſerved.

No ſtronger cenſure can be caſt upon theſe unfeeling parents, than the expreſſions of a ſacred writer*: " If any " provide not for his own, eſpecially " for thoſe of his own houſehold, " he has denied the faith, and is worſe " than an infidel."

'I thank you,' replied Atticus, 'for your candour, in not miſconſtruing my real ſentiments, and ſuppoſing me to

* St. Paul.

be

be an enemy to true generoſity, or that I can poſſibly think favourably of covetouſneſs. A covetous man creeps like a worm upon the ground, and is groveling in ſilence and obſcurity; while a generous man, who is prudent in his conduct that he may be juſt to his family and dependants, as well as liberal to the neceſſitous, is the moſt reſpectable character; to uſe the language of poetry,

" He nor heaps his brooded ſtores,
" Nor on all profuſely pours." †

† GRAY.

CONVERSATION 35.

On the Rein-Deer.

EUBULUS read an account of the Rein-deer, which he had principally drawn from the deſcription of that animal by Holfberg, a native of Stockholm, who had extracted it from the Journal made by Linneus during a Tour into Lapland. Eubulus added, that he was induced to offer it the Society, as it was entirely unmixed with any fabulous reports, and becauſe it contained a number of curious circumſtances relative to the Laplanders.

When the Rein-deer firſt ſheds it's coat, the hairs are of a browniſh aſh colour; as the dog-days approach, gradually

gradually become hoary, until they change almoſt to white. The forepart of the neck is covered with longer and more ſhaggy hairs than the reſt of the body. The mouth and tail are whitiſh. The feet, when the hoofs are grown, are ſurrounded with a white circle. The hairs are ſo thick and cloſe, that if drawn out, the ſkin never appears naked: theſe hairs are erect as in the other ſpecies of deer, but much thicker; and upon their annual ſhedding do not looſen and fall off entirely as in other quadrupeds, but break off cloſe to the root.

The horns are large and ſlender, bending in the middle, ſmooth and round, with a ſmall antler behind; the tops compreſſed, and much palmated. Each horn has uſually one brow antler. Upon their firſt budding in the ſpring the horns are ſoft, covered like the reſt of the body with ſkin and

hair; grow from the points and not from the baſe as is uſual in other animals; are full of veins, and ſo exquiſitely tender, as not to bear the leaſt touch; upon their hardening, in autumn, the ſkin falls off. The females are of the ſame form with thoſe of the males, but ſmall, ſlender, and with fewer branches. The males ſhed their horns about the end of November, the females in the beginning of the ſame month; the female is provided with them only as long as ſhe breeds.

The native country of the rein-deer (beſides the northern parts of Aſia, and North America) is principally European Lapland, a region well calculated for this animal, becauſe it abounds in the liver-wort, a ſpecies of plant, which, in winter, principally conſtitute its food, and which, for that reaſon, is called the *rein*-liver-wort. There are

two

two varieties: the firſt, called *ſilveſtris*, is very common in the barren deſerts of Lapland, and particularly in it's ſandy and gravelly ſoils, as well as in the marſhes abounding with turf, and upon the dry rocks, in all which places it is ſo thickly ſpread, that it bears the appearance of ſnow. The ſecond variety, with its ramifications interwoven, though of leſs frequent growth, is called *Alpine*, becauſe, wherever the *Alps* have been cleared of trees, the ſoil ſoon becomes covered with it. The rein-deer diſcover this plant though buried under the ſnow, and even when the ſuperficies is encruſted with ice. In order to reach their favourite food, they break through the frozen ſurface with their feet, noſtrils, and forehead, which providence has ſhielded with a ſtrong and hard ſkin. Whenever it happens that the

firſt wintry rains are immediately ſucceeded by froſt, which freezes the ground before it is covered with ſnow, and the coat of ice is too hard to be penetrated, then a dreadful want of fodder is ſure to ſucceed. In this caſe the only reſource remaining is for the Laplanders to cut down the old pines for the purpoſe of procuring the Alpine liver-wort that adheres to them, which, however, cannot be obtained in ſufficient quantities for a large herd.

When the herds are permitted to range in ſearch of food, the Laplander has no occaſion to collect winter fodder; but he muſt accompany them into the vaſt tracts of foreſt by night and day, not only in ſummer, but in winter during the moſt intenſe cold. The herdſman would periſh in this dreadful ſeaſon, unleſs nature kindly lent her aſſiſtance. The long nights are illumined

mined with the brilliancy of the ſtars, the reflection from the ſnow, and the conſtant flaſhes of the aurora borealis. The Laplanders guard their limbs againſt the rigorous cold, by clothes, gloves, and ſhoes, formed from the hide of the rein-deer; and preſerve ſtill further their extremities, which are always moſt ſuſceptible, by filling their gloves and ſhoes with a ſpecies of graſs, called *carex veſicaria*, which preſerves the circulation.

The moſt troubleſome enemies, both of the Laplanders and of the rein-deer, are the gnats, which make their appearance about the time of the ſummer ſolſtice, in June, when the heats are very great in theſe northern regions. The ſnow melting upon the mountains pours down in continued torrents, and forms a larger number of marſhes, lakes, and ſtagnant waters, than in moſt

other parts of the world. Theſe marſhy places are occupied by the gnats, which depoſit their eggs in the ſtagnant waters, where they remain in their caterpillar and chryſalis ſtate. In the ſummer, after their metamorphoſes, they iſſue in ſuch prodigious numbers, as to appear like grains of duſt floating in the air. As a ſecurity againſt their bite, which is very troubleſome, the Laplanders daily rub their faces and hands with an ointment compoſed of pitch and milk. In the open air, when they venture to ſpeak, their noſtrils and mouths are filled with theſe inſects; nor are they more ſecure in their cottages, unleſs they burn a conſtant fire of putrid wood, the ſmoke of which diſperſes them. Nevertheleſs (ſo wonderful are the ways of Providence) theſe inſects are of far greater utility than inconvenience; and it is probable,

that

that if the breed was extirpated, the natives would periſh with hunger; for they afford the only food to the water fowl, which are found there in great abundance. About autumn, when the lakes of Lapland begin to freeze, theſe fowl migrate towards the ſouth, and upon the firſt opening of the ſpring, return in large flocks to their prior habitations, where they find a plentiful ſubſiſtence from the grubs of the gnats. As theſe birds do not pair, the females derive no aſſiſtance from the males in feeding their young; therefore the gnats afford ſufficient nouriſhment until the different ſpecies of the bilberry are ripe. The grubs ſerve too for the food of the partridge tribe, myriads of which are daily taken and ſent to Stockholm, and are caught in ſuch large quantities, that they make the ordinary food of the natives in autumn,

as the eggs of the water-fowl are their ſupport in ſpring. The gnats alſo are a prey to the fiſh, which are caught in ſhoals; and thus, by all theſe advantages, make ſome compenſation for the evils which they inflict. The rein-deer particularly ſuffer in the tender extremities of their horns, when they firſt ſhoot in the ſpring, being inceſſantly bit by thoſe troubleſome inſects. Every day the deer repair to their maſter's houſe, where the ſmoke, occaſioned by the burning of the various vegetable ſubſtances, gives them a momentary reſpite from their perſecutors. When the deer have been milked the herds return to the ſummits of the mountains, where, on account of the perpetual froſts, violent winds, and rarefaction of the air, few inſects can remain.

The gad-fly is a ſtill greater torment to the rein-deer: this inſect, which

which is generated from an egg depoſited in the rein-deer's back, comes forth upon the ſhedding of the coat in the middle of ſummer. So great is the terror occaſioned by it, that the moment a ſingle fly appears hovering about the rein-deer, the whole herd raiſe their heads, open wide their eyes, toſs up their horns, breathe quick, ſtrike the ground with their feet, rub each other's ſides, bound from place to place, and as ſuddenly remain motionleſs, as if ſtruck with conſternation. In a few moments they recommence their motions. During this ſeaſon flights of crows are ſeen hovering about the herds, and frequently ſettling upon their backs, in order to extract and feed upon the inſects incloſed within the ſkins. — Each herdſman is attended with his dog, who, upon a ſignal, prevents the herd from ſtraying too wide-

ly from each other: the dog is more particularly of uſe in keeping them from the higheſt ſummits, where they would willingly paſs the whole day, notwithſtanding the ſeverity of the cold, without feeding, rather than be tormented by the gnats and gadflies.

The doe brings forth in May, and yields milk till Michaelmas, and ſometimes till the middle of October. Morning and evening they are driven home: one of the Laplanders holds a long rope by it's two extremities, which dexterouſly throwing round the doe's neck, he draws her to him and milks her. Each doe yields about a pint of milk. Their milk is thinner than that of a cow, but richer and ſtronger; when freſh milked and warmed, it is coagulated by rennet.

The rein-deer draws the ſledge by means of a rope placed between his legs,

legs, and is guided by a rein fixed to his horns. Each deer can draw the weight of one perſon, but rarely more: when preſſed, he will travel from ſeventy to eighty miles, but by ſuch hard driving is generally deſtroyed. It, however, frequently happens that the animal will perſevere in his journey for fifty miles without intermiſſion, and without any refreſhment. He is weak in the back, being fatigued even with the weight of a ſaddle, for which reaſon the Laplanders, whenever they travel in ſummer, and ſledges cannot be uſed, lay acroſs the animal's back a pole, upon which they faſten a ſmall burthen.

The natural term of the rein-deer's life ſeldom exceeds ſixteen or ſeventeen years. The fleſh is eſteemed a great delicacy. In ſpring the Laplanders feed chiefly upon freſh fiſh; in ſummer, upon whey and cheeſe; in the beginning

beginning of autumn, upon birds of the partridge kind, which they inſnare or deſtroy by means of ſlings; at other times upon the fleſh of the rein-deer, which in winter forms their principal food. They chiefly eat it dried or ſmoked, and keep it in a frozen ſtate, or by burying it under ground: they ſometimes eat it freſh, and one deer uſually ſerves four perſons during the ſpace of a week.

The uſes to which the Laplanders apply the principal parts of the rein-deer, are at length detailed in the diſſertation, which Mr. Pennant has well expreſſed in a few words: "The ſkin affords clothing; the fleſh, food; the tendons, bow ſtrings; the horns, glue; and the bones, ſpoons." The author mentions the clatter they make in running, with the colliſion of the ſpurious hoofs, which are large and looſe; a circumſtance which is amply, as well

as

as ingeniouſly, accounted for by Mr. Barrington, in his "Treatiſe upon the Rein-Deer."

'All deſcribers of the rein have taken notice of the cracking noiſe which they make when in motion, which Hoffberg attributes to the animals ſeparating and afterwards bringing together the diviſions of their hoof; but he does not aſſign the cauſe, which I conceive to be the following:—The rein inhabits a country which is covered with ſnow for great part of the year; the hoof of this quadruped is admirably adapted to the ſurface which it is moſt commonly to tread. The under part is entirely covered with hair, in the ſame manner as the claw of the ptarmigan is with feathery briſtles, which is almoſt the only bird that can endure the rigour of the ſame climate. The hoof is not only thus protected,

protected, but the ſame neceſſity which obliges the Laplanders to uſe ſnow-ſhoes, makes the extraordinary width of the rein's hoof equally convenient in paſſing over ſnow, as it prevents their ſinking too deep, which they would be ſubject to, did the weight of their body reſt on a ſmall point. This quadruped has therefore an inſtinct to uſe a hoof of ſuch a form in a ſtill more advantageous manner, by ſeparating it when the hoof is to touch the ground, ſo as to cover a large ſurface of ſnow. The inſtant the leg of the animal is raiſed, the width of the foot becomes inconvenient, eſpecially when it is going againſt the wind; the hoof, therefore, is then immediately contracted, and the colliſion of the parts occaſions the ſnapping, which is heard upon every motion of the rein. Another reaſon, poſſibly, for this noiſe

may

may ariſe from Lapland's being not only covered with ſnow great part of the year, but alſo for ſome time under perpetual night; and as the rein is a gregarious animal, and often obliged to go a great way for ſuſtenance, probably the cracking, which they perpetually make, may ſerve to keep them together when the weather is remarkably dark. Bells round ſheep are known to be very convenient when they graze upon a wide extended down*.'

* Barrington's Miſcellanies, p. 157—158.

CONVERSATION 36.

On Genius and Induſtry.

IT has been long a diſputed point, Atticus obſerved, whether innate principles are implanted in our breaſts, or whether we are born without original notions, and ſolely influenced by education and accident. On the one ſide it is to be remarked, that we ſee bodily diſorders go down in family ſucceſſion; and who can ſay that mental qualifications may not equally deſcend? Does not ſuch a ſuppoſition account, in a great meaſure, for the various diſpoſitions of children in the ſame family? One child ſeems to have inherited not only the features, but

but the temper of the father; another of the mother; and ſometimes thoſe of the grandfather and grandmother. On the other hand, various educations may make the greateſt difference on minds originally equal; and in families whoſe children *ſeem* to have received the *ſame* education, ſome accident may have rendered the effect of that education entirely diſſimilar. One boy, for inſtance, bleſt with a ſtrong conſtitution, has been enabled to brave danger and diſregard pain. Another, weak and ſickly, has contracted timid and indolent habits, and being humoured, has loſt all opportunity of acquiring knowledge, or of gaining bold and maſculine manners, and conſequently has become feeble and inſignificant in character. Thus theſe two boys, apparently alike at their birth, have

branched off, till they are as oppoſite as light from darkneſs.

Let thoſe who have the culture of the human plant be aware of this truth. Let them reflect on the powers of education and example. It is a very narrow way of thinking, to conſider education only what is inculcated by precept. Example has a much more cogent effect. Activity may incline us either to good or evil, as motives operate; but ſloth ſtifles every noble virtue. Activity, in thoſe who have ſeen examples of great actions, may impel them to fight the battles of their country with intrepidity; while the ſame quality in others, bred among villains and ſharpers, may render them daring robbers or deſperate aſſaſſins. Young people ſhould always be accuſtomed to employ themſelves with

diligence

diligence in ſome uſeful attainment, for where the mind remains unoccupied, vice may intrude in preference to virtue. It is the buſineſs of inſtruction, therefore, to lead thoſe who have great abilities to ſuch purſuits as are worthy of their ſuperior talents; and to render thoſe of weak underſtandings as uſeful members of ſociety as their capacities will admit.

Although it cannot be denied that there is a great difference in the underſtandings of men, yet all may acquire a certain degree of knowledge, and there are very few indeed who are born with talents incapable of improvement. Now it has always appeared to me, that, in general, dulneſs proceeds more from want of application, than from any deficiency of intellect. Yet in advancing this poſition I do not mean to ſay, that there

is no difference of abilities; but that thoſe who have not parts equally brilliant with others, often exceed them in attainments, by the exertions of that *induſtry*, which frequently ſteps before *genius*. Indeed, I am in doubt whether there *is* really a *genius* for *one particular* art or ſcience. I am aware, however, that this opinion is not likely to be favourably received, becauſe it is the general notion, that to excel requires a natural propenſity for any art or ſcience; a ſentiment which, in my opinion, tends rather to impede than promote exertion; and is ſimilar to the doctrine of ſome fanatic teachers, who tell their followers, that if they do not feel grace within, they cannot be ſaved, and yet never inform them how that grace is to be attained.

I could produce numerous illuſtra-

tions to prove that perſeverance has often triumphed over ſuppoſed want of natural powers, but ſhall content myſelf with mentioning two inſtances, in Ludovico Carracci and Demoſthenes. Ludovicco Carracci was ſo dull a ſcholar, that his maſter Procaccio, and his fellow ſtudents, uſed to call him, an ox; and both Procaccio and Tintoret adviſed him to relinquiſh an art, in which he would never be able to make any proficiency. Yet this man, by perſeverance, became one of the firſt painters of his age, and the reviver of this art, by reſtoring the true and ſimple ſtile, which had been deſerted by his unnatural and fanciful predeceſſors, and by combining the beauties of Raphael, Michael Angelo, Titian and Correigio.

But the example of Demoſthenes,

though often recited, is ſtill more appoſite. It is univerſally agreed, that no orator ever ſpoke with more energy, and acquired a greater aſcendancy over the paſſions. But to arrive at perfection, he was obliged to combat great difficulties: for he was by nature too feeble to attend the ſchool of exerciſes; he was ſhort-breathed, and had an impediment in his ſpeech, which for a length of time, prevented his pronouncing the letter R. When he firſt ſpoke in public, he was moſt unfavourably received, and ſo overwhelmed with confuſion by the diſapprobation which was manifeſt in his auditors, that he hurried from the aſſembly, hiding his face. Meeting afterwards with his friend Satyrus, a celebrated actor, he complained, that though his whole application had been given

given to eloquence, and the prime of his life paſſed in qualifying himſelf for a public Orator, he had the mortification to perceive, that he was either totally diſregarded, or turned into ridicule; while men of inferior acquirements received the higheſt applauſes. Satyrus made no other anſwer than to deſire him to repeat ſome lines of Sophocles or Euripides, with which Demoſthenes complied. Satyrus then recited the ſame, with ſo much grace and expreſſion, as led Demoſthenes to feel that the moſt excellent compoſition would have little effect, unleſs delivered in a clear, diſtinct tone of voice, and accompanied with proper emphaſis and gracefulneſs of action. From that moment he ſtudied how to conquer his defects. He climbed up ſteep and craggy places, to improve his reſpiration, and to ſtrengthen his

voice. He accuſtomed himſelf to harangue on the ſea ſhore, where the agitation of the waves gave him an idea of the commotion, incident to a popular aſſembly, and ſerved to fortify him againſt repeated diſturbances. He declaimed with pebbles in his mouth, to remedy the imperfection of his ſpeech. He placed a mirror before him, to correct the awkwardneſs of his geſture; and ſuſpended a ſword from the cieling with the point over his ſhoulders, to get the better of a habit he had contracted of raiſing them too high. But however he might think it neceſſary to ſtudy the exterior graces of an orator, he was no leſs attentive to the beauties of ſtile. Thucidydes was his favourite author, whoſe hiſtory he tranſcribed ſeven times; that he might not be interrupted in his ſtudies he retired into a cave, and

ſhaved

ſhaved half his head, as he was ſenſible he could not return into the world, till his hair was grown again. In this manner he ſtruggled with unwearied and obſtinate perſeverance, againſt the habitual defects of his conſtitution; and Valerius Paterculus, the celebrated hiſtorian, ſaid of him, "That his "mother produced *one* Demoſthenes "and induſtry *another*."

"True genius," ſays Johnſon in his life of Milton, "is a mind of large "general powers, *accidentally* deter-"mined to ſome particular direction," and I truſt few will deny, that genius or great abilities are often more brilliant than ſteady, more lively than profound. But as abſtract truth is more agreeably illuſtrated by fable than dry argument, I ſhall exemplify this, which I may be allowed to call my favourite doctrine, by an allegory.

At

At the marriage of Truth and Beauty, games of all ſorts were inſtituted, in honour of the nuptials. The race was not omitted, and the conqueror was intitled to receive at the temple of Knowledge, a crown of laurel from the hands of Truth.

The firſt that entered the liſt was Genius; his appearance was animated and lively; fire ſparkled in his eyes, and a gleam of joy ſhone upon his countenance: he conſidered every minute as ſo much delay to his future ſucceſs, and burned with impatience for the appearance of a competitor, that he might engage in the conteſt, and ſeize upon the honours that he thought ready to be heaped upon him. Induſtry appeared next, with diffidence and heſitation; reſolution was ſtamped upon his countenance; while hope and apprehenſion jointly took poſſeſ-

ſion

ſion of his mind. At the ſignal given Genius ſprung forward with ſurpriſing activity, and was ſcarcely obſerved to touch the ground, ſo lightly did he ſeem to tread, and left Induſtry conſiderably behind him. But, too confident of the victory, he ſoon loitered on the way, and ſuffered his attention to be engaged by a flower, a pebble, or a butterfly, and to be allured from the courſe. Induſtry, in the mean time, purſued a ſlow and uniform pace, and with conſtant and unwearied attention, fixed his eyes upon the temple of Knowledge, till inſenſibly acquiring ſtrength from action he moved with accumulated velocity, which increaſed in proportion as he approached the goal. Genius at length thought of returning to the courſe; but was aſtoniſhed to perceive Induſtry almoſt out of ſight, continuing his way with incredible

incredible ſwiftneſs. Rouſing himſelf immediately, and ſtretching out his wings which lay negligently on his ſhoulders, he attempted to fly; but his wings, from long diſuſe, refuſed to ſupport him; and it was ſome time before he could recover his former expedition. It was then too late; he arrived only to ſee his adverſary enjoy a recompence as great as it was unexpected; and amidſt ſhouts and acclamations, receive the reward due to his perſeverance.

'It is alſo a maxim,' reſumed Aticus, 'which I earneſtly wiſh to inculcate, that Induſtry, without great abilities, will frequently ſurpaſs even Genius itſelf, when unattended with application.' "In truth," ſays a profound author*, "each man's under-

* Harris's Hermes, p. 427.

"ſtanding,

" ſtanding, when ripened and mature,
" is a compoſite of natural capacity,
" and of ſuper-induced habit. Hence
" the greateſt men will be neceſſarily
" thoſe, who poſſeſs the beſt capacities,
" cultivated by the beſt habits. Hence,
" alſo, moderate capacities, when a-
" dorned with valuable ſcience, will
" far tranſcend others, the moſt acute
" by nature, when either neglected,
" or applied to low and baſe purpoſes.
" And thus for the honour of culture
" and good *learning*, they are able to
" render a man, if he will take the
" pains, intrinſically more excellent,
" than his natural ſuperiors."

" It was not by vile loitering in eaſe,
" That Greece obtained the brighter palm
" of art;
" That ſoft, yet ardent Athens learn'd to
" pleaſe,
" To keen the wit, and to ſublime the heart,

" In

" In all ſupreme; complete in every part.
" It was not thence majeſtic Rome aroſe,
" And o'er the nations ſhook her conquering
" dart:
" For ſluggard's brow the laurel never grows:
" RENOWN IS NOT THE CHILD OF INDO-
" LENT REPOSE."

Thomſon.

CONVERSATION 37.

On Humane Inſtitutions.

THE converſation turned this afternoon on humane inſtitutions, and Eubulus obſerved, with a fond but juſt partiality to his own native ſoil, that there was no country in Europe which afforded ſo many and ſuch uſeful foundations for the relief of the poor, as England. Every one, he added, has heard of the Foundling Hoſpital, the Magdalen, the Aſylum, and the benevolent ſocieties with which the metropolis abounds; yet I will venture to aſſert, that there is ſcarcely a county, or great town in which there does not exiſt ſome charitable foundation, many of

of which, an account of their diſtance from the capital, are not ſufficiently noticed. During an excurſion, which I made ſome years ago, as far as the county of Northumberland, I was particularly ſtruck with a moſt excellent inſtitution, which is ſcarcely known beyond the limits of that county. I allude to Bamborough Caſtle, which is appropriated to the relief of ſhipwrecked mariners.

Bamborow or Bamborough, called by the antiquaries "a huge and great "caſtle, one of the ſtrongeſt in theſe "parts, ſtanding on an almoſt perpen-"dicular rock, cloſe to the ſea, acceſ-"ſible only on the ſouth eaſt." This caſtle was remarkable for its ſtrength, and for the numerous ſieges it ſuſtained. In the reign of James the firſt, John Forſter, of an ancient family, obtained a grant of the caſtle, together with the manor,

manor, and it continued in the poſſeſſion of his deſcendants, till Thomas forfeited it in 1713. But his maternal uncle Nathaniel, then biſhop of Durham, purchaſed, and bequeathed it to charitable uſes. The object of this charity is thus deſcribed by Gough, in his new edition of Camden's Britannia*, publiſhed in 1789.

" The Keep, whoſe walls are from " nine to twelve feet thick, has been " fitted up under the direction of Dr. " Sharpe, one of the biſhop's truſtees, " for the relief of diſtreſſed objects by " ſea and land. The upper rooms " are granaries, whence corn is ſold " at four ſhillings a buſhel in times " of ſcarcity. Signals from the top " point out the preciſe ſpot where a " diſtreſſed veſſel lies, to the mariners

* Vol. iii. p. 228.

" of Holy Iſland, who can put off
" their boats, when none from the
" main land can get over the breakers.
" In every great ſtorm two men on
" horſeback patrol the coaſt from
" ſun-ſet to ſun-riſe, and give imme-
" diate notice of ſhipwrecks; and pre-
" miums are alſo paid for the earlieſt
" informations. The ſhipwrecked are
" lodged here a week or more, as
" circumſtances may require, and their
" goods are depoſited in ſtore-houſes.
" Engines are kept for weighing up
" goods or veſſels, and the dead are
" decently buried. The hall and
" other apartments are frequented by
" the doctor, who reſides here many
" months in the year, to ſee that this
" noble plan is properly executed."

This humane inſtitution, has lately found a juſt and warm panegyriſt, in

the Rev. Mr. Bowles, who, being at Bamborough Caſtle, compoſed a ſonnet, which beſpeaks a feeling and benevolent mind.

" Ye holy towers that ſhade the wave-worn
" ſteep,
" Long may ye rear your aged brows ſub-
" lime,
" Though, hurrying ſilent by, relentleſs time
" Aſſail you, and the winter whirlwinds
" ſweep!
" For, far from blazing grandeur's crowded
" halls,
" Here charity has fix'd her choſen ſeat,
" Oft liſtening tearful when the wild winds
" beat
" With hollow bodings round your ancient
" walls:
" And pity, at the dark and ſtormy hour
" Of midnight, when the moon is hid on high,
" Keeps her lone watch upon the topmoſt
" tower,
" And turns her ear to each expiring cry;

" Bleſt if her aid ſome fainting wretch might
" ſave,
" And ſnatch him cold and ſpeechleſs from the
" grave."

I am quite delighted, obſerved Amanda, with the intereſting account which you have given of Bamborough Caſtle; I venerate the memory of the good biſhop of Durham, who formed this humane eſtabliſhment; and I catch a glow of enthuſiaſm from the poetical effuſion which you have juſt read. Yet although I am very ready to ſubſcribe to the juſt eulogium which you have paid to your native country, I am ſure that you will not be diſpleaſed, if I mention one foreign inſtitution, which may, for its benevolence and utility, vie with any which this iſland can boaſt. I allude to the monaſtery of the Auguſtin Friars, on the frontiers of Switzerland and Savoy, of which, if the

the ſociety has no objections, I will read an account lately tranſmitted to me by a friend on his travels.

"The monaſtery of Auguſtins, upon mount St. Bernard, in Switzerland, is, perhaps, the moſt liberal, as well as the moſt humane eſtabliſhment in Europe. The friars who belong to this monaſtery are, as Fielding obſerves of Alworthy in Tom Jones, 'deſerving the notice of God himſelf.' "Human "beings replete with benevolence, ſtu- "dying how they can beſt pleaſe their "creator, by doing moſt good to their "fellow creatures." This convent was founded in the tenth century, by St. Bernard, a native of Savoy, from whom the mountain takes its appellation. It has twice been conſumed by fire, and each time rebuilt upon a larger ſcale; and though an extenſive ha-

bitation, is not always ſufficiently large for the purpoſes of its inſtitution. Its revenues, which were originally conſiderable, are at preſent much reduced, and are principally drawn from ſmall eſtates in the Valais, and in the canton of Berne. The government of Berne (though a proteſtant canton) ſuffers them, in conſideration of the great utility of the inſtitution, to remain undiſturbed. The fraternity, however, derive, from the celebration of maſſes, and the collections made for them in the neighbouring countries, more than ſufficient to anſwer the current expences; and it is even imagined there is a ſaving for contingencies. There are thirty members, of whom only ten or twelve reſide, the reſt (including the provoſt, a moſt worthy man) occupy the different livings dependent upon the convent: and on account of their

age,

age, infirmities or long ſervices, are permitted to be abſent. The ſpot on which this monaſtery ſtands is eight thouſand feet perpendicular from the level of the Mediterranean, and is ſaid to be, and I believe is, the moſt elevated dwelling-place in the world; for there is not even a peaſant's chalet* upon any of the neighbouring Alps, erected more than three thouſand feet above the Mediterranean; and the chalets are only tenanted during eight or ten weeks in the midſt of ſummer, whereas this convent is conſtantly inhabited.

"It is upon a height with the eternal ſnows, ſituated between two lofty mountains covered with glaciers, and expoſed to the piercing and ungovern-

* A chalet is a hut on the Alps, wherein the peaſants make butter and cheeſe.

able fury of the north-eaſt wind. The thermometer in January is frequently at 23 below freezing point, in July or Auguſt ſeldom more than 6 or 7 above it. The cold, however, is not ſo extreme, but that in this latter ſeaſon there is ſome degree of vegetation, though indeed in ſo very weak a ſtate, that the fathers, who have conſtructed little gardens raiſed on terraces in the warmeſt aſpects, can with difficulty rear a few unripe lettuces and dwarf cabbages; and even theſe in ſo ſmall a quantity, that it is more an object of amuſement and relaxation to them, than of utility. At certain diſtances, there are poles to direct the road, and ſmall hovels deſigned either as reſting places upon the aſcent, or to afford immediate ſhelter from the ſeverity of the weather. Cloſe to the convent are the manſions for the dead, where lie

lie expoſed to view, without order, and (on account of the coldneſs of the atmoſphere) without decay, the dead bodies of thoſe unfortunate travellers who have periſhed in this ungenial climate.

"In this deſert ſpot, in this centre, as it were, of the boiſterous elements and the wreck of worlds, ſecluded from the whole earth, but not from their God, live, and live happily (if internal merit has its recompence) theſe hoſpitable anchorites. The ſun, it is true, ſcarcely ever warms them with its rays, nor does the weſtern breeze waft upon its wings the bleſſings of the milder climates; but in exchange they enjoy that ſerenity of mind, which contentment only can afford, and which actions like theirs are particularly calculated to produce. It muſt indeed be a moſt intereſting ſight to witneſs the humanity

of

of theſe good monks during the ſeaſon when this paſſage into Italy is moſt frequented; to obſerve with what readineſs and alacrity they receive all travellers; how they chafe, rub, and warm thoſe who ſtand in need of their medical aſſiſtance, and by means of warm ſoups, and wholeſome aliments (for ſpirituous liquors are thought pernicious) reſtore ſtrength and ſpirits to the more robuſt, whom the keenneſs of the air, or over fatigue, have rendered incapable of proſecuting their journey. All nations, all religions, have an equal claim to their compaſſion; they are the good Samaritans, whoſe univerſal benevolence is reſtrained by no contracted prejudice: all ranks and denominations of men are relieved by them; and though there is, perhaps, ſome ſlight deference paid to the outward appearance of their gueſts;

ſome

ſome more decent chamber or more delicate food allotted to the rich than to the poor, yet the ſame attentions extend invariably to both, and the ſame means are employed for their comfort or recovery.

"But it is not when the paſſage is in a manner open, that the zeal and vigilance of theſe good religioniſts are moſt conſpicuous, and that their humane endeavours merit our warmeſt admiration; during this ſeaſon, they do no more than you or any other charitably diſpoſed perſon might, and, I hope, would be diſpoſed to do in ſimilar ſituations. But it is in winter, rather at the approach of ſpring, that they ſubject themſelves to the greateſt dangers. From the month of November to the month of May not a day paſſes, but, accompanied with their ſervants,

vants, and two or three great dogs * of the Newfoundland ſpecies, they expoſe themſelves to all the inclemencies of the weather, in order to meet and conduct the wandering traveller to the convent. Through the thickeſt fogs, and frequently acroſs enormous drifts of ſnow, they reſolutely accompliſh their generous purpoſes, conducting, and often carrying upon their ſhoulders, thoſe unhappy wretches, whom the violence of the cold, or over fatigue, have bereft either of the uſe of limbs, or deprived of their faculties; frequently they are reluctantly obliged to make uſe of violence, and are forced to rub,

* The ſagacity of theſe animals in the diſcovery of the bodies buried under the ſnow, and in finding out the ſafeſt road, are ſo very extraordinary, that it ſeems as if providence had gifted them for the preſervation of mankind.

ſhake,

ſhake, and even to *beat* the unhappy ſufferers, in order to rouſe them from that lethargic ſtupor, which is invariably the forerunner of a frozen death.

" Great care is taken at the ſame time leſt the good friars themſelves, whilſt thus attentively occupied, do not in their turn ſuffer the very calamity they are thus humanely endeavouring to avert from others; for in winter the cold is ſo dreadfully intenſe in theſe upper regions, that to continue without motion in the open air during the ſpace even of a few minutes, is ſufficient to bring on the firſt ſymptoms of congelation; and as nothing but conſtant exercife is able to prevent the ſtagnation of the blood, they are forced unremittingly to ſtrike their hands and feet againſt the long poles which they carry with them, in order to promote the circulation. In a word, ſo great is their merit,

merit, and ſo almoſt more than human their efforts of courage and reſolution in the proſecution of this melancholy but generous duty, that all that has been ſaid, or could be ſpoken in their praiſe, muſt, and does, fall far ſhort of their great merit."

CONVERSATION 38.

On Taſte.

" Le gout en architecture, en deſſin, &c. git dans les " proportions ; en toutes choſes il n'y a point de gout " s'il n'eſt fondé en raiſon."

Delaſſement d'un Homme d'Eſprit.

AMANDA.— I purpoſe troubling my young friends with ſome reflections on *Taſte*, a ſubject, I confeſs, which ſeems rather adapted to a man of erudition, than to an ignorant female like myſelf, who have not enjoyed the advantages of a claſſical education. The only apology which I ſhall make is, that I do not intend entering into a formal diſcuſſion concerning the origin, progreſs, and advantage of *Taſte* in the fine arts, which is far beyond my

my abilities; but I ſhall rather confine my obſervations to a *taſte* for thoſe things which render us more virtuous and more amiable; to the happineſs ariſing from a domeſtic and country life, and to the advantages derived from a due regulation of our amuſements, dreſs, and reading.—An ingenious author has obſerved, that if we do not poſſeſs a *taſte* for domeſtic happineſs, we loſe the higheſt enjoyment this earth can produce. "Domeſtic "happineſs," he ſays, "gives ſcope to "a *taſte* for truth, for nature, for a no-"ble ſimplicity and ſerene repoſe, in "oppoſition to error, to ſtudied and "forced pleaſures, and the more oſten-"tatious and poignant diverſions. A "pure and generous *taſte* for domeſtic "happineſs can alone give any value "to the poſſeſſion of life: and to thoſe "who underſtand and enjoy it, renders

"all

" all it's concerns important and de-
" lightful. For the ſources of domeſ-
" tic happineſs ariſe, not ſo much from
" the object, as from the eye that be-
" holds them, and the heart that feels
" them; not ſo much from the impor-
" tance of the tranſactions and events
" themſelves, as from the natural and
" ſpontaneous manner in which they
" ariſe, and the pleaſing intereſt taken
" in them."

Theſe reflections on the rational joys which ariſe from domeſtic happineſs, lead me to conſider the great delight that ariſes from a taſte for the country. Although the large ſocieties which are formed in populous cities undoubtedly poſſeſs great advantages, as the intimate intercourſe of many individuals ſtrengthens their power of action, and produces more vigorous efforts than can be found in retirement, or in the

narrow circle of a few acquaintance; yet thoſe who are ſo entirely captivated with the pleaſures of a metropolis as to loſe the reliſh for a country life, are inſenſible to thoſe moſt rational gratifications. Contagion or bad example is leſs frequent in the country; the prevalence of faſhion is not ſo arbitrary; innocence and truth are more frequently found; amuſements are not ſo quick in ſucceſſion, but the enjoyment of them is more acute; the leſs we behold of human art, the more we muſt admire the wonders of nature; her beauties raiſe our thoughts to the adoration of our beneficent Creator, and a grateful mind almoſt ſpontaneouſly burſts forth,

" ——— Who can paint
" Like nature? can imagination boaſt,
" Amid its gay creation, hues like her's?
" Or can it mix them with that matchleſs ſkill,

" And

" And loſe them in each other, as appears
" In every bud that blows?"

THOMSON'S SEASONS, Spring, 465.

But to return from theſe calm and innocent enjoyments, to examine the deſirable attainments which are uſeful in the world.

A good taſte for amuſements may induce us to frequent thoſe entertainments, from which ſome rational gratification is to be obtained. Excellent dramatic repreſentations, fine muſic, or elegant dancing, are ſuitable to rational and refined minds; but indecorous ballads or immoral entertainments, which are ſometimes repreſented at the theatre, and poſture or rope-dancing, which, however aſtoniſhing, is exceedingly diſguſtful; all theſe diverſions are incapable of pleaſing a perſon of real judgment.

I am ſo great a lover of nature, though, I muſt confeſs, nature in her moſt pleaſing attire, that I had rather be delighted than ſurpriſed, and can ſay with Pope:

"Oh, friend! to dazzle let the vain deſign!
"To raiſe the thought, and touch the heart
"be thine."

The learned pig, the eight geeſe that danced cotillions, and the fine ſpirited horſe that is taught to perform all the antic geſtures of a lady's lap-dog, are extraordinary, but unnatural, performances. The approbation which is often beſtowed on the rapid execution of muſical paſſages, merely becauſe they are difficult, in preference to the more eaſy and leſs complicated melody, reminds me of an anſwer made by Dr. Johnſon to a friend who aſked him, whether a fine piece of muſic, which

he had juſt heard, was not extremely difficult?—"Sir," ſaid the Doctor, "it is ſo difficult I wiſh it had been "impoſſible."

I may, perhaps, be thought too faſtidious and ſingular in extending the influence of good *Taſte*, when I aſſert that it often prevents profuſion, checks diſſipation, and excludes ennui. Expenſive dinners, large aſſemblies, and high play, ruin the conſtitution and fortune of many individuals, and produce uneaſineſs and diſguſt; while a ſmall dinner neatly ſerved, a ſelect ſociety of a few friends, a little concert of muſic, or moderate play, diſſipate no fortune, injure no one's health, and create no unpleaſing reflections.

Many are the advantages which ariſe from a good *taſte* in dreſs:—A man who follows the extreme of the faſhion, renders himſelf ſo truly ridicu-

lous, that he lays aſide all pretenſions of being of the ſuperior ſex, and appears inferior to the weakeſt of our's; and a woman proves her good ſenſe by adopting moderate and ſimple apparel. I once knew a young lady, who ſo extremely overloaded herſelf with ornaments, that ſhe reminded me of the princeſs Jane d'Albret, heireſs to the kingdom of Navarre, who was married to the duke of Cleves in the reign of Francis the firſt, king of France. This princeſs was extremely young, and, according to the manners of the age, was habited in robes ſo weighty, and covered with ſo many pearls and jewels, that not being able to move under them, ſhe was obliged to be carried in the arms of one of the courtiers to church. I aſked the young lady why ſhe wore ſuch expenſive and gaudy clothes; ſhe replied, "It is natural

"for

" for me to be deſirous of appearing " faſhionable as I have a large for- " tune; and I ſhould be conſidered " as penurious if I did not diſtinguiſh " myſelf by the coſtlineſs of my deco- " rations." I endeavoured to convince her, that as her perſon was ſhort, ſhe muſt appear rather encumbered, than embelliſhed, with a profuſion of flowers and feathers. But my remonſtrance had no effect; the love of faſhion ſtill prevailed, and ſhe joined with this ſentiment in l'Homme Singulier of Des Touches:

" Dieu m'en garde: à mon age il eſt permis
" je penſe
" Et de ſuivre la mode, et meme de l'outrer.
" Je fais mon plus grand ſoin du ſoin de me
" parer,
" Rien ne me flatte plus qu'une mode nouvelle;
" Car, ſans etre à la mode, on ne peut etre belle:
" La plus extravagante a des graces pour moi,
" Et la mode, en un mot, eſt ma ſupreme loi."

But, perhaps, a ſtill more ſtriking inſtance of magnificence of attire, united with want of taſte, is exemplified in a deſcription of one of the Nabobs ladies at Madras:—"Her perſon was "thin, genteel, and middle-ſized; her "complexion tawny, as all the Moors "are; her eyes, as black as poſſible, "large and fine, and painted at the "edges, which is what moſt of the "Moors do; her lips, painted red; "and between every tooth, which was "fine and regular, ſhe was painted "black, that they might look like "ebony. Her face was done over "like froſted work, with leaf-gold; "the nails of her fingers and toes, for "they were barefooted, were painted "red, and likewiſe the middle of her "hands. Her hair was as black as jet, "very long and thick, which was "combed back neatly, and braided; "it

"it hung a great deal below her "waiſt; ſhe had a fillet of diamonds "round her head, edged with pearls "of a large ſize. Her ear-rings were "as broad as my hand, made of dia-"monds and pearls, ſo that they al-"moſt covered each ſide of her face; "then ſhe had a noſe jewel, that went "through her left noſtril. Round her "neck ſhe had twenty rows of pearls, "none ſmaller than a pea, but a great "number of them as large as the end "of my little finger. From her neck-"lace there hung a great number of "rows of large pearls, which came "down below her waiſt; at the end "of which hung an emerald as large "as my hand, and as thick. Her "coat which ſhe had on was made of "fine gold-muſlin, made cloſe to her, "and a ſlaſhed ſleeve: a gold veil, "which ſhe hung careleſsly over her "head and went over her body, all

"the

" the front of it was trimmed with a " row of large pearls. She had a gir- " dle, or rather hoop, made of dia- " monds, which went round the bot- " tom of her waiſt, it was above an " inch broad; ſeveral ſtrings of large " pearls round her waiſt, which hung " almoſt to her knees, and great knots " of pearls at the end of them; ten " rows of large pearls round her wriſts, " and ten rows round her arms a little " above her elbows; and her fingers, " every one of them, adorned with " rich rings of all ſorts and ſizes: her " feet and ancles were, if poſſible, " richer and more adorned than her " hands and arms. In ſhort, we com- " puted ſhe had many more diamonds " and pearls about her, than would fill " a peck meaſure*."

* " A Letter from a Lady at Madras to her Friends in London," p. 5.

To

To thoſe who are unaccuſtomed to ſuch modes, the appearance of the Nabob's lady would be highly ridiculous; and yet we can recollect faſhions which were no leſs prepoſterous; ſuch as the enormous height and breadth of the head-dreſs, of which the caricature prints ſcarcely exceed the reality; hats almoſt as large as umbrellas; tight-laced-ſtays, ſo injurious to the conſtitution; and vaſt hoops, which are ſo well ridiculed in the "Spectator." In the preſent age, the ſtile of dreſs, upon the whole, is extremely becoming, and as every woman is at liberty to adapt it to her particular features, complexion, and figure, it is almoſt unpardonable to diſgrace the perſon with affected ornaments, and to deviate too much from native ſimplicity.

A good *taſte* in reading is particularly eſſential for the preſervation of

our morals, and the promotion of our happineſs. There is an old proverb, "Tell me what company you keep, and "I will tell you what manner of man "you are." With no leſs propriety it may be ſaid,—"tell me what books "you read, and I will tell you your prin-"ciples and mode of thinking." It is needleſs to urge, that good and virtuous ſentiments, as well as vice and folly, may be learnt no leſs by converſing with books, than with men; and that it is the duty of every parent to make a proper ſelection for the uſe of his children. Light and trivial publications may amuſe, but if they are written merely to entertain, without any intention to improve, they ought not to engage ſo much of our time as to withdraw us from more ſerious reading. It is to be regretted, that the generality of people, and particularly women, read only

only for the amuſement of the preſent moment, and when they have cloſed the book, think of it no more. To dwell upon particular paſſages, or intereſting characters, on moral or religious ſubjects, ought to be the principal end of our ſtudies; and unleſs we can imprint the ſubſtance of what we peruſe on our memory, we ſhall have employed ourſelves to very little purpoſe. Yet, a good memory is not alone ſufficient, for memory is not always accompanied with obſervation. To be able to trace chronologically hiſtorical facts, to be almoſt an index for dates and names, to recollect intereſting anecdotes, is a wonderful gift of the underſtanding; but ſtill greater is that diſcernment which leads us to draw happy inferences, and to apply our information on proper occaſions. To inform as well as embelliſh our

minds,

minds, and to add obſervation to memory, though obtained by few, ſhould be purſued by all: becauſe, even if we do not attain all the qualities to which we aſpire, yet the very attempt will be attended with ſome acquiſitions which will be uſeful and inſtructive; as the chymiſts who ſearched after the philoſopher's ſtone, though they did not procure the object of their purſuit, yet made many important diſcoveries.

'No one,' ſaid Atticus, 'is better calculated to communicate inſtruction with facility, and to encourage the acquiſition of good *taſte*, than yourſelf. As you well know that I am not inclined to believe that *Taſte* is an innate principle, the gift of nature, or a ſpecies of inſpiration, but am convinced that it is an acquiſition obtained by much application and experience, I have often been at a loſs to conjecture

by

by what means you, who have had few advantages of education, and who have always been engaged in domeſtic concerns, and in the management of a large family, could have made ſuch a proficiency.'

'Were I not well acquainted with you,' replied Amanda, 'I ſhould ſuſpect your ſincerity, and be offended at the miſapplication of your compliment; but as I am ready to allow that the little ſhare of *Taſte* which I may poſſeſs is more the acquiſition of labour than the gift of nature; and as it may conduce to the advantage of the younger part of the Society, to prove that it is by no means difficult, I ſhall explain the ſimple method which I have invariably adopted.

'I wiſhed early in life to procure at leaſt a moderate degree of knowledge, though I had no great opportunities

tunities for application; I endeavoured to read methodically; beſides religious ſubjects, hiſtory and poetry chiefly engaged my attention; yet as I travelled over the beaten track, I ſtopt to make obſervations, and occaſionally wandered from the great road to viſit retired and pictureſque ſcenes. But though I was always delighted with books, yet I gained ſtill more information by converſing with ſenſible and literary perſons; and what greatly facilitated my deſire of improvement, I became an obſerver.

'With this idea of gaining inſtruction from obſervation, I ſeldom took a journey without finding ſome circumſtance worthy of remark, or paſſed a few hours in ſociety without hearing ſome anecdote which left an impreſſion; and I generally wrote down in the evening whatever I had noticed in the day,

which

which might be agreeable to me to recollect, or could give pleaſure to my friends.

When the effuſions of uncultivated minds were diſplayed by a naiveté of expreſſion, which ſhewed the dawnings of ſenſe in a child, or where traits of fortitude and humanity burſt forth in the lower claſs of mankind, I enjoyed peculiar ſatisfaction; always reflecting, that if great pains are taken to draw forth genius, it is no wonder that it ſhines, but that it is diſtinguiſhed with double luſtre when it irradiates of itſelf.

Thus obſervation and attention have been the ſimple means which I have adopted to cultivate my underſtanding; and if my young friends wiſh to follow my example, they will ſeldom fail of meeting with occurrences to improve their taſte.

CONVERSATION 39.

On the Female Characters of SHAKESPEAR, *and particularly on Female Friendſhip, exemplified in* CELIA.

CLEORA opened the converſation by reading a letter which ſhe had juſt received from Atticus, who was making a tour in the midland counties of England; a letter which ought to be communicated to the Society, as it alluded in part to her delineation of the character of Imogen, which ſhe had ſubmitted on a former occaſion, and which ſhe was happy to find had been the means of drawing further remarks on the Female Characters of her favourite Poet.

"I ſhould like to ſee your aſtoniſh-

"ment,

" ment, when you open this ſmall
" packet, and diſcover the encloſed lit-
" tle box, whoſe intrinſic value is
" ſcarcely a penny. I would alſo, in
" the language of the turf, venture to
" " wager any odds," that you cannot
" gueſs what it means, or what it al-
" ludes to. Know then, I am now at
" Stratford upon Avon, in the county
" of Warwick, the native place

" Of Him, who made proud Avon's ſtream
" The Fairy's haunt, the Muſes' theme;

" the ſpot too where our immortal
" Shakeſpeare died, and where his
" aſhes reſt. Cannot you fancy me
" bending with reverence to kiſs the
" ſtone which covers his remains, with
" more zeal and devotion than ever
" pilgrim preſſed his lips to the ſhrine
" of the Holy Dame of Loretto?

"gueſs then from whence is this little "box? It is carved from the mulberry "tree, which Shakeſpear is ſaid to "have planted. His arms are on the "ſide, and his name engraved at the "bottom. I do earneſtly requeſt, that "you will prize this more than Yo-"rick did the horn ſnuff-box of the "poor monk of the order of Saint "Francis; and whenever you hear "Bavius or Mævius decrying the "great bard, that you will offer them "a pinch from this ſacred repoſitory, "and ſay, as Hamlet did to the ghoſt "of his murdered father,

"Reſt! reſt! perturbed ſpirit!"

"You, Cleora, deſerve this particular "homage, who reſcued our great bard "from an imputation which has been "ſo frequently caſt upon him, and

"from

"from which, let me not be aſhamed "to acknowledge, I was by no means "exempt, till your juſt remarks on the "character of Imogen converted me. "I have lately paid particular attention "to Shakeſpear, and am ſatisfied that "the women have no reaſon to find "fault with him for having entertained "an unfavourable opinion of their ſex; "for the obſervation is not true, that "moſt of his female characters are "either inſipid or wicked. I will even "venture to affirm, that no poet ever "underſtood, or diſtinguiſhed with ſuch "delicacy and truth, the traits of the "female mind; and could I be induced "to believe in the Pythagorean doc-"trine, I ſhould almoſt ſuppoſe, that "the ſoul of ſome elegant and accom-"pliſhed woman, had migrated into "Shakeſpear's body.

"Although Shakeſpear has not, in "any other drama, drawn ſo perfect, "and at the ſame time ſo intereſting a "character, in *all* reſpects, as that of "Imogen; yet he has delineated ſe- "veral which may be called perfect in "one point of view, as exhibiting an "example of virtuous affection, which "abſorbs every other feeling, and ren- "ders every conſideration ſubſervient "to a ruling paſſion, founded on prin- "ciples and nature. Thus, in CON- "STANCE, he has given an inſtance of "Maternal Affection; in CELIA, of "Diſintereſted Friendſhip; and in COR- "DELIA, of Filial Piety. But I ſhall "confine myſelf at preſent to the deli- "neation of Diſintereſted Friendſhip "and Maternal Affection."

The repreſentation of friendſhip between Roſalind and Celia,

"Whoſe

——————— " Whoſe loves
" Are dearer than the natural bond of ſiſters—"

is ſweetly pourtrayed in " As you like it." Roſalind is ſo lively and ſpirited a character, that the merit of Celia is not ſufficiently appreciated; ſhe is generally viewed only as a foil to ſet off Roſalind; but her humility and unobtruſive conduct is the very reaſon which makes her worthy of admiration. Celia is introduced as inferior in beauty and talents to her couſin Roſalind, which ſuperiority too frequently raiſes envy and jealouſy in the female breaſt; but Celia was incapable of feeling thoſe mean paſſions. Her uncle, having uſurped the dominion of his own brother, baniſhed him, and only retained his daughter Roſalind as an object of charity. In the firſt ſcene where

Celia is introduced, ſhe is repreſented as endeavouring to cheer her friend under theſe afflicting circumſtances,

"I pray thee, Roſalind, ſweet coz, "be merry."

Roſ. "Dear Celia, I ſhow more "mirth than I am miſtreſs of, and "would you yet I were merrier? Un-"leſs you could teach me to forget a "baniſhed father, you muſt not learn "me to remember any extraordinary "pleaſure."

Celia. "Herein I ſee thou lov'ſt me "not with the full weight I love thee. "If my uncle, thy baniſhed father, had "baniſhed thy uncle, the duke, my "father, I could have taught my love "to take thy father for mine. So "would'ſt thou, if the truth of thy love

" to me were as righteouſly tempered as " mine is to thee."

Roſ. " Well, I will forget the con- " dition of my eſtate, to rejoice in " your's."

The anſwer of Celia ſhews the ſtrongeſt ſenſe of juſtice as well as of affection.

" You know my father hath no " child but I, nor none is like to have; " and truly, when he dies, thou ſhalt " be his heir; for what he hath taken " away from thy father perforce, I " will render thee again in affection; " by mine honour I will; and when I " break that oath let me turn monſter; " therefore, my ſweet Roſe, my dear " Roſe, be merry."

In a ſubſequent ſcene, Celia gives a ſtill ſtronger proof of the force and diſintereſtedneſs of her friendſhip.

Roſalind

Roſalind ſays:

" Look! here comes the duke—
Celia. " With his eyes full of anger.
Duke. " Miſtreſs, diſpatch you with your
" ſafeſt haſte,
" And get you from our court.
Roſ. " Me, uncle!
Duke. " You, couſin.
" Within theſe ten days, if that thou be'ſt
" found
" So near our public court as twenty miles,
" Thou dieſt for it."

Roſalind having in vain endeavoured to ſoften his obdurate heart, and to juſtify herſelf from his ſuſpicions, Celia then ſays:

" Dear ſovereign, hear me ſpeak.
Duke. " Ay, Celia, we but ſtaid her for
" your ſake,
" Elſe had ſhe with her father rang'd along."
Celia. " I did not then entreat to have her ſtay;
" It was your pleaſure, and your own remorſe;
" I was too young that time to value her;
" But

" But now I know her; if ſhe be a traitor,
" Why ſo am I; we ſtill have ſlept together,
" Roſe at an inſtant, learn'd, play'd, eat to-
" gether,
" And whereſoe'er we went, like Juno's ſwans,
" Still we went coupled, and inſeparable."

Though the duke's anſwer is calculated, in the ſtrongeſt manner, to excite her envy, it is without effect.

Duke. " She is too ſubtle for thee, and her
" ſmoothneſs,
" Her very ſilence, and her patience,
" Speak to the people, and they pity her:
" Thou art a fool, ſhe robs thee of thy name,
" And thou wilt ſhew more bright, and ſeem
" more virtuous,
" When ſhe is gone; then open not thy lips:
" Firm and irrevocable is my doom,
" Which I have paſs'd upon her; ſhe is baniſh'd.
Cel. " Pronounce that ſentence then on me,
" my liege,
" I cannot live out of her company."

Duke.

Duke. "You are a fool—you, niece, provide
"yourſelf:
"If you outſtay the time, upon mine honour,
"And in the greatneſs of my word, you die."
[Exit *Duke.*

Roſalind being then reduced to the dreadful alternative of loſing her life if ſhe continued in the duke's territories, or of going unprotected into the wide world, where ſhe muſt be expoſed to imminent dangers; in this terrible dilemma, Celia cannot immediately adopt an expedient to relieve her friend, ſhe then only feelingly ſays:

"Oh my poor Roſalind, where wilt thou go?
"Wilt thou change fathers, I will give thee
"mine.
"I charge thee be not thou more griev'd than
"I am."

Roſalind ſays:

"I have more cauſe."

But

But Celia, after a moment's reflection, adopts an expedient to aſſiſt her friend, by determining to quit her parental home, and accompany Roſalind: and though my underſtanding condemns ſo imprudent a ſtep, yet, circumſtanced as they both were, my heart excuſes the error committed in the heat of friendſhip.

Celia ſays:

" Pr'ythee be cheerful, know'ſt thou not the
" duke
" Has baniſh'd me his daughter."
Roſalind. " That he hath not."
Celia. " No? hath not? Roſalind lacks then
" the love
" Which teacheth me that thou and I am one:
" Shall we be ſunder'd? ſhall we part, ſweet
" girl?
" No, let my father ſeek another heir.
" Therefore deviſe with me, how we may fly;
" Whither to go, and what to bear with us;
" And do not ſeek to take your charge upon you,

" To

" To bear your griefs yourſelf, and leave me out:
" For by this Heav'n, now at our ſorrows pale,
" Say what thou can'ſt, I'll go along with thee.

Roſ. " Why, whither ſhall we go?

Celia. " To ſeek my uncle in the foreſt of
" Arden."

Roſ. " Alas, what danger will it be to us,
" Maids as we are, to travel forth ſo far!
" Beauty provoketh thieves ſooner than gold.

Cel. " I'll put myſelf in poor and mean attire,
" And with a kind of umber ſmirch my face;
" The like do you; ſo ſhall we paſs along,
" And never ſtir aſſailants."

Celia did not bely her promiſe; ſhe ſacrificed, in favour of her friend, the comfort of home, the proſpect of ſucceeding to the throne, and even the feelings of a daughter. Juſtly irritated at her father's conduct, ſhe accompanied Roſalind to the foreſt of Arden, braved the dangers to which an unprotected female is expoſed, ſuffered the

calls

calls of hunger, ſupported her ſituation with cheerfulneſs; and when her father, touched with remorſe for his paſt uſurpation, reſtored the crown to his brother, and retired from the world, ſhe was more happy that the crown ſhould be placed on the head of Roſalind than on her own.

CONVERSATION 40.

On Maternal Affection.

CLEORA, at this meeting, continued the remarks of Atticus on Maternal Affection, as delineated in the character of CONSTANCE.

Shakeſpear has ſketched, with a maſterly hand, the character of Conſtance, in the tragedy of King John.—Henry the Second, king of England, had four ſons: Henry, who died before his father, without iſſue male: Richard, ſurnamed Cœur de Lion, who ſucceeded to the throne: Geoffrey; and John. Geoffrey married Conſtance, daughter and heireſs of Coran, duke

of

of Brittany, and died in 1186; and Conſtance was delivered of a poſthumous ſon, called Arthur, who inherited the duchy of Brittany, and was preſumptive heir to the crown of England. His uncle Richard, on his departure to the Holy Land, declared him his heir; but on his death-bed made a different diſpoſition, and bequeathed all his dominions to his brother John. The regular courſe of the ſucceſſion in the eldeſt branch of the family was at that period ſo imperfectly eſtabliſhed, and had been ſo often violated, that this deviation occaſioned no diſturbance. John was acknowledged king of England without oppoſition, took quiet poſſeſſion of the throne, and Arthur's title was diſregarded. But on the continent the caſe was otherwiſe; the young duke of

Brittany was, in the twelfth year of his age, declared by the barons count of Anjou and Maine. His mother Conſtance placed him in the hands of Philip king of France, and engaged that monarch to eſpouſe his cauſe, by making him do homage for all his dominions on the continent.

In repreſenting Conſtance, Shakeſpear has deviated from hiſtorical truth, highly to the advantage of her character, and to the encreaſe of dramatic effect. Hiſtory informs us, that Conſtance, on the death of her firſt huſband Geoffrey, married Ranulph earl of Cheſter; but afterwards obtained a divorce, and eſpouſed Guy de Thouars, to whom ſhe bore two daughters, and died in 1201, without being witneſs to the misfortunes of her ſon. Shakeſpear deſcribes her as the widow of

Geoffrey,

Geoffrey, not married again, and ſurviving the impriſonment of Arthur; and introduces her as holding him by the hand, while Philip king of France, and the archduke of Auſtria, are confederating before the walls of Angiers, to ſupport his cauſe,

" And to rebuke the uſurpation
" Of his unnatural uncle, Engliſh John."

Impreſſed with gratitude for their aſſiſtance, ſhe exclaims, with heart-felt fervour,

" O, take his mother's thanks, a widow's thanks,
" Till your ſtrong hand ſhall help to give him
" ſtrength
" To make a more requital of your love!"

The Poet does not repreſent her as ſo hurried away by reſentment of paſt injuries, as to tranſgreſs the bounds of juſtice, and to be eager for revenge;

on the contrary, he has deſcribed her as ſtriving to repreſs the ardour of her protectors "in ſuch a juſt and chari-"table a war;" and only exhorting them to forbear commencing hoſtilities till they are convinced that peace cannot be obtained on equitable grounds:

"Stay for an anſwer to your embaſie,
"Leſt unadvis'd you ſtain your ſwords with
"blood!
"My lord Chatilon may from England bring
"That right in peace which here we urge in
"war;
"And then we ſhall repent each drop of blood
"That hot, raſh haſte ſo indiſcreetly ſhed."

In conformity to the ſame ſentiment ſhe obſerves a moſt reſpectful ſilence while the cauſe of Arthur is pleading between the kings of France and England, and does not interrupt the converſation until her ſtep-mother, and moſt

moſt bitter enemy, Eleanor queen dowager of England, queſtions her ſon's right. Then follows an altercation with Eleanor, and an interchange of opprobrious words paſſes between the two women, which, although inconſiſtent with the delicacy of the preſent age, and derogatory from the dignified ſtation of the two characters, is yet conſonant to the feelings of an injured mother, rouſed by the aggravating inſult offered to her honour, and by the reproachful exclamation of Eleanor:

"Out, Inſolent! thy baſtard ſhall be king
"That thou may'ſt be a queen and check the
"world."

Yet though her maternal zeal ſeems to have hurried her beyond the bounds of diſcretion, ſhe ſubmits without murmur or reply to the juſt rebuke of Philip:

"Peace, Lady! pauſe, or be more temperate."

Conſtance retires, with the full perſuaſion that all the confederates are determined to ſupport the cauſe of her ſon, and to oppoſe the uſurpation of John. How great, therefore, ſhould be her diſappointment when ſhe is informed, that the king of France has made an amicable compromiſe with England, and accepted the princeſs Blanch of Spain, king John's niece; and that John had affected to confer on Arthur, dominions and dignities which he already poſſeſſed. In this inſtance Shakeſpear has ſurpaſſed our moſt ſanguine expectations; nor could the moſt impaſſioned mother, feeling for the degradation, and perhaps the ruin of an only ſon, diſplay ſtronger ſigns of grief and indignation, than are exhibited by Conſtance. When lord Saliſ-

bury

bury informs her that the marriage between Blanch and Lewis was finally ſettled, ſhe does not believe, till after repeated confirmations, that to be poſſible which is ſo contrary to her fond expectations and deareſt intereſts:

" Gone to be married! gone to ſwear a peace!
" Falſe blood to falſe blood join'd! Gone to
" be friends!
" Shall Lewis have Blanch? and Blanch thoſe
" provinces?
" It is not ſo; thou haſt miſ-ſpoke, miſ-heard;
" Be well-advis'd, tell o'er thy tale again.
" It cannot be; thou doſt but ſay, 'tis ſo.
" I have a king's oath to the contrary
" Thou ſhalt be puniſh'd for thus frightning
" me;
" For I am ſick, and capable of fears;
" Oppreſt with wrongs, and therefore full of
" fears;
" A widow, huſbandleſs, ſubject to fears.
" And though thou now confeſs, thou didſt but
" jeſt,
" With my vext ſpirits I cannot take a truce,

" But they will quake and tremble all this day.
" What doſt thou mean by ſhaking of thy head?
" Why doſt thou look ſo ſadly on my ſon?
" What means that hand upon that breaſt of
" thine?
" Why holds thine eye that lamentable rheum,
" Like a proud river peering o'er his bounds?
" Be theſe ſad ſighs confirmers of thy words?
" Then ſpeak again, not all thy former tale,
" But this one word, whether thy tale be true."

Saliſbury having confirmed his former account, ſhe is affected with the natural, though unreaſonable impreſſion, with which we are apt to be prejudiced againſt all meſſengers of bad tidings, however innocent of the evil which they report:

" Fellow, be gone! I cannot brook thy ſight;
" This news hath made thee a moſt ugly man."

But when Arthur interrupts her,

" I do beſeech you, madam, be content"—

ſtruck

ſtruck with the affectionate and graceful manner with which he utters thoſe expreſſions of tenderneſs, ſhe finds an additional cauſe of ſorrow; and her maternal regret is aggravated by the conſideration, that the beauty and dignified demeanor of her ſon, rendered him more worthy of wearing that crown of which he was going to be deprived:

" If thou, that bid me be content, were grim,
" Full of unpleaſing blots, and ſightleſs ſtains,
" Lame, fooliſh, crooked, ſwart, prodigious,
" Patch'd with foul moles, and eye-offending
" marks,
" I would not care, I then would be content:
" For then I ſhould not love thee; no, nor thou
" Become thy great birth, nor deſerve the crown.
" But thou art fair, and at thy birth, dear boy!
" Nature and fortune join'd to make thee great.
" Of nature's gifts thou may'ſt with lilies boaſt,
" And with the half-blown roſe. But Fortune,
" Oh!

" She

" She is corrupted, chang'd, and won from thee,
" Adulterates hourly with thine uncle John."

Finding herſelf in too great affliction to bear the ſight of any perſon, ſhe is deſirous of brooding over her griefs in private. But when Saliſbury ſays,

" Pardon me, madam,
" I may not go without thee to the kings,"—

her anſwer is full of compoſed dignity, expreſſive of an undaunted mind: and convinced that no greater calamity can poſſibly befal her than that which ſhe has juſt experienced:

" Thou may'ſt, thou ſhalt, I will not go with
" thee:
" I will inſtruct my ſorrows to be proud;
" For grief is proud, and makes his owner ſtoop.
" To me, and to the ſtate of my great grief,
" Let kings aſſemble; for my grief's ſo great,
" That no ſupporter but the huge firm earth

" Can

"Can hold it up: here I and Sorrow ſit;
"Here is my throne, bid kings come bow to it,"

A more pathetic and ſublime picture cannot be well conceived, than this perſonification of Sorrow ſitting by Conſtance in ſilent horror, and compleating the ſum of human miſery. On this beautiful ſcene Johnſon has judiciouſly remarked: "Sorrow ſoftens "the mind while it is warmed by hope, "but hardens it when it is congealed "by deſpair. Diſtreſs, while there re-"mains any proſpect of relief, is weak "and flexible; but when no ſuccour "appears, is fearleſs and ſtubborn; "angry alike at thoſe who injure, and "at thoſe who do not help; careleſs to "pleaſe, where nothing can be gained; "and fearleſs to offend where there is "nothing further to be dreaded. Such "was Shakeſpear's knowledge of the "paſſions."

Rouſed

Rouſed from this ſtate of torpid deſpair by the preſence of the two kings, ſhe reproaches Philip with fearleſs dignity, for having baſely ſacrificed the cauſe of Arthur to his alliance with England:

" You have beguil'd me with a counterfeit,
" Reſembling majeſty; which, 'touch'd and
" try'd,
" Proves valueleſs: you are forſworn, forſworn:
" You came in arms to ſpill my enemies' blood;
" But now in arms you ſtrengthen it with your's.
" The grappling vigour and rough frown of war,
" Is cold in amity and painted peace,
" And our oppreſſion hath made up this league:
" Arm, arm, ye heavens, againſt theſe perjur'd
" kings!
" A widow cries, be huſband to me, heavens!
" Let not the hours of this ungodly day
" Wear out the day in peace; but, ere ſun ſet,
" Set armed diſcord 'twixt theſe perjur'd kings!—
" Hear me, Oh, hear me!"

In this one inſtance her wiſhes were accom-

accompliſhed, and in the courſe of the parley ſhe had the gratification to ſee the two monarchs again at variance, and ſeparating in anger, to decide their quarrel by force of arms. But her flattering expectations were ſoon blaſted, and ſhe is again reduced to the moſt abject ſtate of deſpondency. Philip is defeated, and Arthur is taken priſoner and conveyed into England. Oppreſs'd with this accumulated weight of ſorrow, Conſtance is thus introduced upon the ſcene, when Philip exclaims,

"Look, who comes here? a grave unto a ſoul;
"Holding th' eternal ſpirit, 'gainſt her will,
"In the vile priſon of afflicted breath:
"I pr'ythee, lady, go away with me."

Without deigning to liſten to his exhortation, ſhe reproaches him as being the cauſe of her preſent diſtreſs:

"Lo!

"Lo! now, now ſee the iſſue of your peace!"

But when Philip endeavours to preach patience to her,

"Patience, good lady! comfort, gentle Conſtance!"

ſhe rejects all idea of comfort, and invokes Death, as her only hope of relief:

"No, I defy all counſel and redreſs,
"But that which ends all counſel, true redreſs,
"Death, death: O, amiable, lovely death!
"Come, grin on me, and I will think thou
"ſmil'ſt,
"And kiſs thee as thy wife! Miſery's love,
"O, come to me!"

And in anſwer to him, when he again attempts to ſooth her,

"O fair affliction, peace!"

ſhe perſeveres in denying the poſſibility

lity of receiving the ſmalleſt alleviation,

"No, no, I will not, having breath to cry:
"O, that my tongue were in the thunder's
"mouth!
"Then with a paſſion I would ſhake the world,
"And rouze from ſleep that fell anatomy,
"Which cannot hear a lady's feeble voice,
"And ſcorns a modern invocation."

To Pandulpho, who ſays,

"Lady, you utter madneſs, and not ſorrow"—

her anſwer is pathetic, full of exquiſite ſenſibility, which is verging to madneſs, but ſtill feels, with poignancy, the full meaſure of her calamities:

"Thou art not holy to belie me ſo;
"I am not mad: this hair I tear is mine;
"My name is Conſtance; I was Geoffrey's wife;
"Young Arthur is my ſon, and he is loſt:
"I am not mad; I would to heaven, I were!
"For then, 'tis like, I ſhould forget myſelf.

"Preach

" Preach ſome philoſophy to make me mad,
" And thou ſhalt be canonized, Cardinal:
" For being not mad, but ſenſible of grief,
" My reaſonable part produces reaſon
" How I may be delivered of theſe woes,
" And teaches me to kill or hang myſelf:
" If I were mad, I ſhould forget my ſon;
" Or madly think a babe of clouts were he:
" I am not mad; too well, too well I feel
" The diff'rent plague of each calamity."

Her ſorrow now becomes outrageous, ſurpaſſes all controul, and ends in frenzy.

Phi. " Bind up your hairs.

Conſt. " Yes that I will; and wherefore will
" I do it!
" I tore them from theſe bonds, and cry'd aloud,
" O, that theſe hands could ſo redeem my ſon,
" As they have given theſe hairs their liberty!
" But now I envy at their liberty
" And will again commit them to their bonds,
" Becauſe my poor child is a priſoner.
" And, father Cardinal, I have heard you ſay,
" That we ſhall ſee and know our friends again.

" For

" For, ſince the birth of Cain, the firſt male
" child,
" To him that did but yeſterday ſuſpire,
" There was not ſuch a gracious creature born.
" But now will canker ſorrow eat my bud,
" And chaſe the native beauty from his cheek,
" And he will look as hollow as a ghoſt;
" As dim and meagre as an ague's fit;
" And ſo he'll die; and, riſing ſo again,
" When I ſhall meet him in the court of heaven
" I ſhall not know him; therefore never, never
" Muſt I behold my pretty Arthur more.
Pand. " You hold too heinous a reſpect of
" grief.
Conſt. " He talks to me that never had a ſon."

This natural and beautiful exclamation is a ſufficient anſwer to thoſe commentators who condemn the expreſſions of Conſtance as exaggerated and unnatural. Extreme grief diſplays itſelf only two ways; it is either abſorbed in total ſilence, or utters wild expreſſions, which often appear extravagant to cold

critics, who never felt the ſame ſenſations, and who meaſure a mother's grief by line and rule. Garrick, who ſo well underſtood and ſo ably performed the characters of Shakeſpear, happening to paſs by a houſe from whence a child had fallen from a window, and been killed on the ſpot, obtained admittance; and that inimitable actor was often heard to declare, that the moſt incoherent expreſſions and frantic geſtures, which he had ever uttered or uſed on the ſtage, were ſpiritleſs and unanimated in compariſon with the real agonies and deſpair of the afflicted mother.

When Philip expoſtulates,

"You are as fond of grief as of your child,"

Conſtance dwells with maternal fondneſs and regret on the recollection of Arthur's beauty, looks, words, and action,

action, and ſhews, that the image of her ſon occupies all her thoughts, and has taken ſuch ſtrong poſſeſſion of her imagination, as to exclude every other idea:

"Grief fills the room up of my abſent child,
"Lies in my bed, walks up and down with me;
"Puts on his pretty looks, repeats his words,
"Remembers me of all his gracious parts,
"Stuffs out his vacant garments with his form."

But when ſhe adds,

"Fare you well; had you ſuch a loſs as I,
"I could give better comfort than you do."

"It is a ſentiment," Johnſon remarks, "which great ſorrow always "dictates. Whoever cannnot help "himſelf caſts his eyes on others for "aſſiſtance, and often miſtakes their in-"ability for coldneſs."

Then, tearing off her head-dreſs, ſhe concludes,

" I will not keep this form upon my head,
" When there is ſuch diſorder in my wit.
" O Lord! my boy, my Arthur, my fair ſon!
" My life, my joy, my food, my all the world!
" My widow-comfort, and my ſorrows' cure!"

Having thus worked herſelf up to the higheſt pitch of deſpair, ſhe quits the ſcene, and leads the audience to expect the cataſtrophe, that

" The lady Conſtance in a frenzy dy'd."

CONVERSATION 41.

On Funeral Rites.

HONORIA obſerved, that ſhe ſhould offer to the ſociety a few obſervations on Funeral Rites; and endeavour to trace, from the earlieſt ages, ſome of the cuſtoms practiſed by different nations in the interment of their dead. The ſubject, ſhe added, though in itſelf gloomy, would be ſo far enlivened with hiſtorical reſearches, and interſperſed with poetical quotations, as not to appear unintereſting to the younger part of the Society.

The Egyptians, the earlieſt people of whoſe funeral rites we have any authentic account, paid particular reſpect to the

dead. The bodies, after being embalmed, were wrapped in bandages of fine linen and gum; and they had the art, by this means, of preſerving them ſo perfectly from corruption, that even the hair, features, and complexion were retained. The ceremony of embalming being finiſhed, the body was placed in an open cheſt. But before the laſt rites were performed, the deceaſed underwent a ſolemn judgment. On the day intended for the burial, the relations and judges, who amounted frequently to more than forty, aſſembled on the ſhore of a lake, which divided the diſtrict of the dead from the habitation of the living. A veſſel ſteered by a pilot, called in the Egyptian language, Charon, was prepared to convey the remains acroſs the lake; but before they were put on board, the conduct

of

of the deceaſed was arraigned; and if any accuſer could prove that he had led an evil life, the judges paſſed ſentence, and the body was precluded from burial: but if no accuſer appeared, or if the award of the judges was favourable, they pronounced an encomium on the deceaſed, ſupplicated the infernal deities to receive him among the bleſt, and Charon conveyed the body acroſs the lake to be depoſited with other virtuous citizens. Even kings were ſubject to this ſolemn trial: ſeveral were judicially deprived of ſepulchral honours; and the dread of ſuch a poſthumous diſgrace, is ſaid to have had a moſt ſalutary influence. Noble and magnificent mauſoleums were raiſed for theſe mummies; and their friends uſed to derive pleaſure from viſiting and contemplating the

countenances of those with whom they had formerly conversed. Their earnest desire of preserving their dead kings gave rise to those wonders of the world, the pyramids; which, from their vast bulk and solidity, were calculated to endure for ages.

This practice of constructing large sepulchres, and at the same time inaccessible, owed its origin to the opinion entertained by the Egyptians, that as long as the body could be preserved perfect, the soul, in the transmigration of which they believed, deserted not its former companion during the period of its own sojourning amidst the inferior spheres. Though they knew its vital energy had ceased to animate the various members, yet they fondly flattered themselves that it continued hovering as a faithful guardian round

its

its former habitation, and at length reluctantly left the mouldering clay. The ſoul, after this deſertion of its antient comrade, continued its extenſive circuit in the ſucceſſive animation of various other forms, terreſtrial, aquatic, and æthereal, and according to Herodotus, finally finiſhed its wanderings in the ſpace of 3000 years*.

From theſe ideas and real ceremonies of the Egyptians the Greeks formed their belief, and tranſmitted to poſterity, with ſeveral additions, their fabulous ideas of Styx, Tartarus, Elyſium, and the boatman Charon. They taught, that the dead were to be judged by Minos and Radamanthus, and were to be deſtined to Tartarus or Elyſium, according to the virtue or vice of their

* Indian Antiquities or Diſſertations, part iii. p. 421.

pre-

preceding lives; they believed, that the ſpirits of thoſe who were deprived of the rites of burial, could not be conveyed acroſs the Styx, but would wander an hundred years before they could be received into the Elyſian fields. Homer has alluded to this doctrine, where he repreſents the ſhade of Patroclus appearing to Achilles, aſleep:

"And ſleeps Achilles (thus the phantom ſaid)
"Sleeps my Achilles, his Patroclus dead?
"Living I ſeem'd his deareſt, tend'reſt care;
"But now forgot, I wander in the air.
"Let my pale corſe the rites of burial know;
"And give me entrance in the ſhades below.
"Till then the ſpirit finds no reſting place,
"But here and there th' unbody'd ſpectres chaſe
"The vagrant dead around the dark abode,
"Forbid to croſs th' irremeable flood."

POPE'S Homer.

And Virgil introduces the Sybil acquainting

quainting Æneas, in the paſſage acroſs the Styx:

" The ghoſts rejected are the unhappy crew
" Depriv'd of ſepulchre, and funeral due,
" The boatman, Charon; thoſe the buried hoſt,
" He ferries over to the further coaſt.
" Nor dares his tranſport veſſel croſs the waves
" With ſuch whoſe bones are not compoſed in
" graves.
" A hundred years they wander on the ſhore;
" At length their penance done, are waſted
" o'er."

From this perſuaſion, that the ſoul could not be admitted into the Elyſian fields till their bodies were committed to the earth, it is no wonder that the Greeks ſhould be extremely ſolicitous for the interment of their deceaſed friends. It was conſidered as a duty incumbent on all who met with a dead body, to throw three handfuls of earth upon

upon it; and if any one neglected to perform this ceremony, he was obliged to expiate his crime by ſacrificing a hog to Ceres. Hence alſo no kind of death was ſo much dreaded as a ſhipwreck; and when Æneas deplores the loſs of his pilot Palinurus, who fell from the helm into the ſea, he principally laments, that

"His naked corpſe is doom'd on ſhores un-
"known to lie."

As the manes, or ſoul ſeparated from the body, were ſuppoſed to be delighted with blood, hence Ulyſſes, in his deſcent to the infernal regions, is ſaid to have dug a trench, and filling it with the blood of ſheep ſacrificed, drew the ſouls of the departed to the place, and the ſhades of thoſe who were permitted to drink the gore, recollected paſt tranſactions, and replied

to

to the queſtions of Ulyſſes. Thus alſo Achilles is repreſented ſacrificing to the manes of Patroclus various animals and twelve Trojan captives; and Æneas ſelects eight youths for the purpoſe of immolating them at the funeral of Pallas. But in the more refined civilized ages of Greece this horrid cuſtom fell into diſuſe; and the rites of burial were accompanied with no circumſtances of cruelty.

For the purpoſe of obtaining admiſſion into the ſhades below, a ſmall coin was placed in the mouth of the deceaſed, which was intended as Charon's fare for wafting the departed ſoul over the river Styx. A cake was alſo prepared to appeaſe the fury of Cerberus, the door-keeper of hell, and to procure the ghoſt a ſafe and quiet entrance. The body was laid upon the

funeral

funeral pile; the relations and friends divested themselves of their ornaments, cut off their hair and threw it on the corpse; the pile was kindled by the nearest relation, and the wind invoked to assist the flames in reducing the body quickly to ashes; a circumstance finely introduced by Homer in the funeral of Patroclus:

"But fast beside Achilles stood in pray'r,
"Invoked the God, whose spirit moves the air,
"And victims promis'd, and libations cast
"To gentle Zephyr, and the Boreal blast:
"He call'd the aerial powers along the skies,
"To breathe and whisper to the fires to rise."

The ashes and bones of the deceased were then selected; and after being sprinkled with the richest perfumes, were placed in an urn made of earth, brass, marble, silver, or gold, according to the wealth or rank of the deceased,

and ſolemnly depoſited in the ſepulchre. To the memory of ſuch citizens as enjoyed during their lives only a moderate fortune, the ſimpleſt column, inſcribed with their names, was raiſed; but to honour the poſſeſſors of more extenſive property, magnificent and decorated edifices were erected. If the body of a perſon who had died in battle could not be found and delivered to his companions, they proclaimed his name three times with a loud tone of voice; and by offering ſacrifices and libations, they flattered themſelves they ſhould appeaſe his manes; to which they raiſed cenotaphs, or empty ſepulchres, which were eſteemed nearly as honourable as a tomb. At the concluſion of the rites they repaired to a funeral-feaſt, where the converſation turned in praiſe of the deceaſed: it was uſual to renew

theſe

theſe intereſting meetings yearly, on his birth day, in order to commemorate his virtues, and to excite others to imitation. It was cuſtomary to inſtitute funeral games, and all ſorts of exercifes for perſons of high rank, which are deſcribed by Homer and Virgil. The prizes were of various ſorts and value, according to the quality and magnificence of the perſon that celebrated them. The garlands given to victors on the occaſion, were uſually of parſley, which was thought to have ſome particular affinity to the dead.

As the Romans principally drew their mythology from the Greeks, and believed alſo that the ſouls of thoſe whoſe bodies were unburied, were refuſed admittance into the Elyſian fields; their funeral rites reſembled, in moſt inſtances, thoſe of the Greeks, and

and were performed with equal ſolemnity. In all public interments, the body of a Roman was kept ſeven days before it was conſigned to the tomb. It was bathed in warm water, and ſprinkled with perfumes, dreſſed in his beſt robe, and laid on a couch, decked with leaves of flowers, in the veſtibule, with the feet outward, as if to take its laſt departure; the coin for Charon's freight was not omitted, and cypreſs-boughs were ſuſpended on the outſide of the houſe. Formerly the Romans interred their bodies; and Sylla was the firſt patrician of the Cornelian family whoſe body was burnt, that his remains might not be dug up and diſperſed like thoſe of Marius.

Public funerals were celebrated in the day; private burials at night; and both were accompanied with torches.

The funeral proceſſions of the great were regulated by law: The firſt group was compoſed of muſicians, women hired to lament, or ſing the funeral-ſong in praiſes of the deceaſed to the ſound of the flutes; then followed players and buffoons, who danced and ſung, one of whom, called the principal mimic, imitated the words and actions of the deceaſed, or introduced apt quotations from dramatic writers; and laſtly before the corpſe were carried the images of the deceaſed and of their anceſtors, while their friends walked behind in mourning, the ſons with their heads veiled, and the daughters with their heads bare and their hair diſhevelled, contrary to the ordinary cuſtom of both; the magiſtrates without their badges, and the nobility without their ornaments. The corpſe, with

with the couch, was placed on the funeral pile, which was raiſed without the city at the diſtance of ſixty feet from any houſe; the eyes of the deceaſed were then opened; the neareſt relations ſet fire to the pile, turning away their faces to ſhew that they did it with reluctance. They threw into the fire various perfumes, cups of oil, diſhes, clothes and ornaments. When the urn which contained the aſhes, was laid on the ſepulchre, thoſe who were preſent were ſprinkled by a prieſt with pure water, from a branch of olive or laurel: At their departure they took a ſolemn leave of the aſhes, repeating ſeveral times, "Farewel, for ever! We ſhall all follow thee when nature has preſcribed our time:" and finally concluded their ejaculations by wiſhing that his aſhes might lie quietly and

not be disturbed. Among the Romans as well as among the Greeks, funeral games were usually solemnized on the death of illustrious citizens; at which, besides chariot races, wrestling and other exercises, fights of gladiators were introduced, a barbarous exhibition, which seems to have taken rise from the custom of sacrificing captives on the funeral pile, and was not prohibited till the benevolent spirit of the christian religion interfered, in the reign of Constantine. The sepulchre was strewed with flowers, and covered with crowns and fillets, and frequently illuminated with lamps; near it were little altars, on which libations were made and incense burnt; a feast was added both for the dead and living; beans, lettuces, bread, eggs, and other provisions were laid on the tomb for the

the ſpirits, who were ſuppoſed to partake of the repaſt: and the offals were burned.

It was a prevailing ſuperſtition among the Greeks and Romans, as well as among many other nations, that the ſoul was ſuſceptible of the ſame paſſions as when allied to the body, and followed, in a future ſtate, the ſame employments which they purſued in this world; an opinion happily alluded to by Virgil, in his beautiful deſcription of the Elyſian fields, when Æneas and the Sybil firſt enter:

" Theſe holy rites perform'd, they took their
" way
" Where long extended plains of pleaſure lay.
" The verdant fields with thoſe of Heav'n may
" vie;
" With æther veſted, and a purple ſky:
" The bliſsful ſeat of happy ſouls below:
" Stars of their own, and their own ſuns they
" know.

" Their airy limbs in ſport they exerciſe,
" And, on the green, contend the wreſtlers' prize.
" Some in heroic verſe divinely ſing:
" Others in artful meaſures lead the ring.
" The Thracian Bard, ſurrounded by the reſt,
" There ſtands conſpicuous in the flowing veſt.
" His flying fingers, and harmonious quill,
" Strike ſeven diſtinguiſh'd notes, and ſev'n at once they fill.
" Here found they Teucer's old heroic race,
" Born better times and happier years to grace.
" Aſſaracus and Ilus here enjoy
" Perpetual fame with him who founded Troy.
" The chief beheld their chariots from afar;
" Their ſhining arms, and courſers trained to war:
" Their lances fix'd in earth, their ſteeds around,
" Free from their harneſs, graze the flow'ry ground.
" The love of horſes which they had alive,
" And care of chariots, after death ſurvive.
" Some chearful ſouls were feaſting on the plain:
" Some did the ſong, and ſome the choir maintain."

Hence,

Hence, beſides clothes, ornaments and proviſions were thrown upon the funeral pile, and various animals, eſpecially ſuch as the deceaſed had loved, which were ſacrificed for the purpoſe of accompanying them in a future ſtate. Thus Achilles at the obſequies of Patroclus:

" Then jars of honey, and of fragrant oil,
" Suſpends around, low bending o'er the pile.
" Four ſprightly courſers, with a deadly groan,
" Pour forth their lives, and on the pile are
" thrown.
" Of nine large dogs, domeſtic at his board,
" Fall two, ſelected to attend their lord."

If the deceaſed had been a ſoldier, the arms and ſpoils taken from the enemy were thrown upon the piles:

" Amidſt the blaze their pious brethren throw
" The ſpoils, in battle taken from the foe;
" Helms, bitts emboſs'd, and ſwords of ſhining
" ſteel,
" One caſts a target, one a chariot wheel;

" Some to their fellows their own arms reſtore,
" The faulchions which in luckleſs fight they
" bore.
" Their bucklers pierc'd, their darts beſtow'd
" in vain,
" And ſhiver'd lances gather'd from the plain."

DRYDEN'S Virgil.

The notion that the departed ſouls follow the ſame kind of employment in a future ſtate which they purſued in this world, has been, and ſtill is, a prevalent ſuperſtition among moſt nations, beſides the Greeks and Romans. Hence among the Gauls the ſame cuſtom prevailed, and in many parts of the eaſt, the favourite wife, ſervants, and horſes on which he was accuſtomed to ride, were ſacrificed at the tomb of the departed. Hence too the Indian wives to this day, except in thoſe parts where the Chriſtian and Mahometan governments forbid ſo cruel a practice,

throw

throw themſelves upon the funeral pile of their huſbands. The ceremony is thus deſcribed in *Sketches chiefly relating to the hiſtory, religion, learning, and manners of the Hindoos:* "The body of the huſband was carried to the water ſide early in the morning; the widow followed, accompanied by three principal Brahmans, her children, parents, relations, and a numerous concourſe of people. While ſhe was waiting for permiſſion to perform this act, ſhe was praying with the Brahmans, and waſhing in the Ganges. When the permiſſion arrived, ſhe retired for a ſhort time with her female relations, amongſt whom was her mother. She then diveſted herſelf of her bracelets and other ornaments, tied them to her girdle, and was conducted by her female relations to one corner of the pile,

pile, which was an arched arbour of dry ſticks, boughs, and leaves, open only at one end to admit her entrance. At the corner of it the Brahman had made a ſmall fire: one of them gave into her hand a leaf of the bale tree, the wood formerly conſecrated to form part of the funeral pile: there was ſome glue on this leaf, which is a ſort of butter, and which melted and fell into the fire; and this operation was a preparatory ſymbol of her approaching diſſolution. While this ceremony was performing, the third Brahman read ſome paragraphs out of a religious book, and aſked her ſome queſtions, to which ſhe anſwered with a ſteady and ſerene countenance. She was then led, with great ſolemnity, three times round the pile, the Brahman reading before her; when ſhe came the third time to

the ſmall fire, ſhe took a ſolemn leave of her children, parents, and relations; after which one of the Brahmans dipped a large wick of cotton in ſome glue, kindled it, and gave it ready lighted into her hand, and led her to the open ſide of the arbour; there all the Brahmans fell at her feet: after ſhe had bleſſed them, they retired, weeping. Having aſcended the pile, and entered the arbour, ſhe made a profound reverence at the feet of the deceaſed, advanced and ſeated herſelf by his head; ſhe looked, in ſilent meditation, on his face, for the ſpace of a minute, then ſet fire to the arbour in three different places; obſerving that ſhe had ſet fire to leeward, and that the flames blew from her, ſhe roſe and ſet fire to windward, and reſumed her ſtation with the moſt undaunted reſolution.

reſolution. The pile being of combuſtible matters, the ſupporters of the roof were preſently conſumed, and it tumbled upon her."

The ſame ſuperſtitious notion ſhews itſelf, though in a more innocent way, among many of the natives in the vaſt Ruſſian empire. The Tunguſians bury the corpſe in it's clothes, and with it ſome tobacco, pipes, and various utenſils: and if it be a man, they likewiſe depoſit his arms. The Laplanders uſually place a ſledge with it's bottom upwards on the grave, and lay upon it ſome proviſions and pieces of furniture. Many of the natives of the new-diſcovered iſlands between Aſia and America, inter with the deceaſed his clothes, furniture, and arms, that he may be able to begin houſekeeping in his ſubterraneous habitation; and often

ſacrifice

ſacrifice cattle and large game, that the ſouls of the beaſts may be uſeful to the ſpirit.

In Finland the natives throw into the grave various utenſils; as a laſt, to make ſhoes; a ſtick, to drive the dogs away; a branch of roſe tree twigs, for repelling evil ſpirits; and three pieces of cake, and ſay, "this is for thee."

But if we quit theſe ſuperſtitious practices, and conſider the rites of burial practiſed by civilized chriſtian nations, we ſhall find, that the early converts to Chriſtianity adopted the Egyptian manner of embalming, which they practiſed on their martyrs. The Roman catholics of the preſent times, imitate ſeveral cuſtoms of the ancients, purifying the body with ablutions, throwing incenſe on it, and embalming.

ing. At Naples particularly, the nuns are kept in ſuch preſervation, as almoſt to give the idea of life.

I truſt that I ſhall not be accuſed of prejudice and partiality when I obſerve, that there is no ceremony more ſimple, no ſervice more calculated to inſpire us with true humility, free from depreſſion on one ſide, or to give us exalted ſentiments void of arrogance on the other, than the burial of the church of England, or the portions of ſcripture there ſelected: whoever will read this ſervice attentively, muſt find in it the ſtrongeſt excitement to virtue, and the firmeſt ſupport under affliction: the effects ariſing from this perfect confidence in the reſurrection, which is expreſſed in the burial ſervice, is beautifully repreſented by Thompſon, in his admirable poem on Winter:

" Ye

" Ye good diſtreſs'd!
" Ye noble few, who here unbending ſtand
" Beneath life's preſſure! yet bear up a while,
" And what your bounded view, which only
" ſaw
" A little part, deem'd evil, is no more:
" The ſtorms of wintry time will quickly paſs,
" And one unbounded ſpring encircle all."

Independently, however, of the religious comfort which is imparted in our burial ſervice, we ſometimes ſee certain gratifications which are derived from immaterial circumſtances, and however trivial they may appear, are not to be judged improper as long as they are perfectly innocent. Of this kind may be deemed the practice in ſome country villages, of throwing flowers into the grave; and it is curious to trace this apparently ſimple cuſtom, up to the politeſt periods of Greece and Rome: Virgil deſcribing

Anchiſes

Anchiſes grieving for Marcellus, makes him ſay,

"Full caniſters of fragrant lilies bring,
"Mix'd with the purple roſes of the ſpring:
"Let me with fun'ral flowers his body ſtrow;
"This gift which parents to their children owe,
"This unavailing gift, at leaſt I may beſtow."

DRYDEN'S Virgil.

The alluſion of human life to flowers has been conſtantly made by the greateſt poets, and particularly in theſe lines of Dryden's Virgil on the death of Euryalus:

"His ſnowy neck reclines upon his breaſt,
"Like a fair flower by the keen ſhare oppreſt;
"Like a white poppy, ſinking on the plain,
"Whoſe heavy head is over-charg'd with rain."

This ſentiment, added Honoria, is feelingly expreſſed in an epitaph, which I obſerved the other day in a country church yard:

On

On a Child of Eleven Years of Age.

Stop, paſſenger, and ſhed the plaintive tear
For youthful innocence that ſlumbers here:
Like a fair flower in ſpring, the garden's pride,
Nip'd in the bloom of opening ſweets, ſhe died.
Yet leſs for her let pity's tear be given,
She changes pain for bliſs, and earth for Heaven;
Weep for a father's heart with grief oppreſt,
And the keen pangs that rend a mother's breaſt.

The graves of Glamorganſhire, decorated with flowers and herbs, at once gratify the relations of the departed, and pleaſe the obſerver. During a tour into that pictureſque country, I was witneſs to an affecting incident in a retired church-yard, which made ſo deep an impreſſion on me as produced this effuſion.

The Graves in Glamorganſhire.

Near a ſequeſter'd wood's impervious ſhade,
An humble village church o'erlooks the glade,

There round the greenſwaithe plat, in many a heap,
The child, the parent, and the grandſire ſleep;
To ſacred duſt conſign'd, and calm repoſe,
The lover's ſorrow, and the widow's woes.
There nymphs and ſwains in pious zeal repair,
To plant choice herbs, that ſcent the ambient air;
Strew blooming flowers, that ſhew each varied die,
To deck the earth where kindred relics lie;
Bleſs the rais'd ſoil, as each freſh bud appears,
Or moiſt the hallow'd turf with pity's tears.

O'er a freſh grave, where pinks of purple hue,
Sweet marjoram, wild mint, and fennel grew,
(What time the ſun, majeſtic in decline,
Shed o'er the riſing moon his light divine)
With downcaſt eyes a village Maiden hung,
With agonizing grief her hands ſhe wrung,
In mournful notes ſhe pour'd her plaints around,
The ſympathiſing woods her plaints reſound,
" While deſtin'd in a foreign land to roam
" I heav'd foreboding ſighs to diſtant home;
" That home, where ſickneſs claim'd my filial
" care,
" Too late, alas! to ſave me from deſpair,
" Remorſeleſs

" Remorſeleſs death with unrelenting doom
" Sunk my kind parent in this lonely tomb.
" To chace keen anguiſh from a mother's breaſt,
" To cloſe with filial hand her eyes to reſt,
" To hear the laſt faint accents of her tongue,
" Where e'en in death parental fondneſs hung;
" Mid dying pangs to ſee benignant grace;
" And feel!—oh Heaven! to feel her laſt em-
" brace,
" My lot forbad; hence will for ever flow
" My tears, hence throbs my heart with endleſs
" woe!

The child of ſorrow ceas'd her plaintive tale,
But not her ſighs ſtill floating on the gale.
Still the cold grave ſhe preſs'd, till night had ſhed
Its chilling damps o'er her deſponding head;
Then roſe, " and ling'ring with a long delay,"
Penſive ſhe took her ſolitary way.

CONVERSATION 42.

On Simplicity.

In umil donna l'alta Belta divina.

PETRARCA.

WHEN we aſſembled this evening, Amanda ſaid, that her mind was always impreſſed with the deſire of offering ſuch remarks to her young friends as might be the means of adding grace to the natural charms of youth and beauty. The ornament I mean now to propoſe (continued ſhe) is not variable, as every breath of wind; is not dependent upon faſhion, nor regulated by caprice; it is neither imported from Paris nor purchaſed from the millener; is not encloſed in a box of rouge, nor interwoven with a plume of feathers;

it will become the beauty of every denomination, and is equally ſuited to the country as to the court; it is derived from within, is the genuine fruit of good ſenſe and virtue, and is called *Simplicity*.

I have read, in ſome romance, of two mirrors, one of which reflected the defects, and the other diſplayed the beauties of the countenance. Affectation is the firſt mirror, and ſimplicity the ſecond. Affectation is a mirror that not only enlarges every defect, but diminiſhes every charm; deprives even the moſt perfect beauty of the power of pleaſing; is the caricature of an agreeable countenance, and by a ſtrange transformation, like the wand of Circe, converts grace into deformity. But ſimplicity is a mirror which leſſens every blemiſh, places

each feature in the faireſt light, and throws a brilliancy over the natural charms of the perſon.

If the moſt favoured part of the female ſex could perceive how much more beautiful they looked when they carry the appearance of ſimplicity, and how their charms are adorned by a natural behaviour, they would ſurely never ſully their graces by affectation and pride, or deſtroy thoſe very powers of pleaſing which nature has beſtowed with a bountiful and liberal hand. Simplicity, like the girdle of Venus deſcribed in Homer, improves every power of pleaſing, ſtrengthens attachment, and gives duration to the feeble impreſſions of perſonal charms, when novelty wears away, and habit has rendered them familiar.

Do you remember, in a late converſation

ſation upon this ſubject, when the company in general agreed that a ſimplicity of character was almoſt entirely loſt, and deemed inconſiſtent with the preſent mode of education, and the manners of the world, it was aſſerted, that a girl of a natural character would be expoſed to ridicule by expreſſing her thoughts in an artleſs or undiſguiſed manner; and inſtead of being admired for her *naiveté*, might be cenſured for boldneſs, or laughed at as an ideot. I will own to you, that ſimplicity is far from being the moſt prevalent character of the age. But I think that there are ſome females now exiſting who will anſwer that deſcription, and will obtain the approbation of the ſenſible and diſcerning part of mankind. By a natural character, I mean, that girl of eighteen, who has a per-

fectly innocent and good mind, whoſe livelineſs of diſpoſition leads her to enjoy rationally every diverſion of which ſhe partakes, and to deliver her ſentiments without an awkward baſhfulneſs on the one hand, or pertneſs on the other. Who rather waits to be drawn forth before ſhe appears to advantage, and never expects to be admired; but when ſhe is noticed, receives the attention of either ſex with eaſe and propriety. Who does not expreſs every thought of her heart, but never adopts the ſentiments that are totally diſſimilar to her own. I am not conſcious that I have in the leaſt flattered this amiable young perſon, whom her friends will eaſily recollect by the name of Henrietta. The character of the beautiful Amoret has been delineated by the pen of a celebrated

celebrated author, and fully illuſtrates that true ſimplicity, which is the ſubject of our preſent diſcuſſion.

" Adorning faſhion, unadorn'd by dreſs,
" Simple from taſte, and not from careleſſneſs;
" Diſcreet in geſture, in deportment mild,
" Not ſtiff with prudence, nor uncouthly wild:
" No ſtate has Amoret, no ſtudied mien,
" She moves no goddeſs, and ſhe looks no
" queen!
" The ſofter charm that in her boſom lies
" Is fram'd to captivate, but not ſurpriſe;
" It juſtly ſuits th' expreſſion of her face,
" 'Tis leſs than dignity, and more than grace."

It has been obſerved, that fables are more uſeful than hiſtory. Plain truth will ſometimes create diſguſt, but under the veil of fable will often meet with a more welcome reception.

Soon after the birth of Beauty a great feaſt was prepared, and many gueſts were invited. Among the reſt

Affectation

Affectation and Simplicity made their appearance, and put in their claim for the education of the lovely infant. Affectation came forward with pertneſs and coquetry, and demanded, with full aſſurance of ſucceſs, that the child ſhould be conſigned to her care. "Beauty," ſays ſhe, "is deſcended from no common parents, her accompliſhments will require no vulgar hand to expand her ripening charms, and to give to every grace its full power of pleaſing. I will inſtruct her in all the nice and refined arts which diſtinguiſh elegance and delicacy from vulgarity and ill breeding. I will beſtow upon her all the ornaments and graces of the body, the languiſhing air, the attracting look, the inſinuating prattle. I will infuſe into her breaſt a conſciouſneſs of her own powers, inſtruct her

in

in the method of uſing them, and will add to her accompliſhments a proper degree of vanity, without which ſhe will degenerate into a plain and unbecoming ſimplicity, and her graces will loſe their influence by not being diſplayed to the greateſt advantage." When ſhe had concluded, a total ſilence convinced her that her offer was received with contempt.

When Simplicity came forth, ſhe was embarraſſed on appearing before ſo numerous an aſſembly, and at firſt fixed her eyes upon the ground, but ſoon gently raiſed them, while ſhe thus addreſſed her auditors: "If the education of Beauty ſhould be conferred upon me, and I ſhould be thought worthy of that honour, my firſt care ſhall be to inſtil into her mind the pureſt principles, to hold up to her imi-

tation

tation the amiable nature of benevolence, to paint virtue in her faireſt colours, and to expoſe vice in her real and moſt horrid deformity. Though it will be impoſſible to conceal from her knowledge her own perſonal accompliſhments, the exquiſite charms which the gods have beſtowed upon her, I will endeavour to guard her againſt vanity, by convincing her that ſhe received them from heaven. By teaching her to bear her graces humbly, thoſe very charms will receive an additional perfection, and be improved and heightened by a ſpirit of humility. It ſhall be my conſtant care to remove from her behaviour all levity and aſſurance, all languiſhing and affected airs, being convinced that perfect lovelineſs can only be found where external charms are animated by the purity of

of the heart; and when the beauties of the countenance reflect the genuine feelings of goodneſs and benevolence, neither diſtorted by affectation nor ſullied by vanity, they make an impreſſion which laſts for ever, and kindle a flame never to be extinguiſhed." She ceaſed, and a murmur of applauſe ran through the whole aſſembly.

When the parents of Beauty delivered the child into her arms, Simplicity received the preſent with a look which expreſſed gratitude for the preference beſtowed upon her, and an unfeigned tenderneſs for the lovely object conſigned to her charge. Faint ſtruggles of unaffected timidity, which aroſe within her mind at the greatneſs of the undertaking, were quickly ſuppreſſed by a conſciouſneſs of rectitude, while Affectation pined away at the ſight,

ſight, and retired with all the viſible marks of diſappointment and diſgrace.

In the mean time Simplicity watched over her charge with all the attention of a parent; with unwearied aſſiduity baffled the attempts of Affectation to corrupt her infant mind; preſerved her from the impreſſions of pride, and gave her as conſtant companions Innocence and Senſibility.

Beauty, thus educated, ſeemed a bleſſing too exalted for the imperfection and weakneſs of human nature, ſhe was ſummoned therefore to the heavenly manſions, and, given in marriage to Truth, enjoyed a happy immortality.

To ſome, perhaps, added Amanda, the concluſion of the allegory may ſeem to bear hard upon human nature: it is intended only to imply, that as perfection

fection is not the lot of humanity, perfect beauty, perfect innocence, and perfect ſimplicity are not to be found upon earth, but are the portion only of the bleſſed inhabitants of the realms above. And it muſt not be forgotten, that though ſimplicity and innocence heighten the powers of beauty, and improve her charms, yet they are ſtill invariably the ſame, will always preſerve their pure and ſpotleſs nature, even without the union of beauty, and will ever prove the beſt and moſt durable ornaments of the female character.

CONVERSATION 43.

Death of Amanda.

A FEW days after our laſt meeting, Amanda was ſeized with a diſorder, which baffled the ſkill of her phyſician, and put a period to her exiſtence. A fortnight after her death Eubulus requeſted the ſociety to aſſemble: they all complied with his requeſt, except Honoria, who was too much afflicted to make her appearance. It will eaſily be imagined that every individual was greatly affected at the loſs of Amanda; more than half of the members had been educated under her direction, improved by her inſtruction, and cheriſhed by her affection. This very

very meeting had originated from *her*, and had been cemented by the ſoundneſs of her judgment, and the ſweetneſs of her temper; they dreaded therefore giving way to their feelings in the preſent diſpoſition of their minds, and particularly endeavoured to turn the converſation from the late melancholy event. It was at firſt deſultory and unintereſting, all reflecting upon the ſame ſubject which they avoided mentioning: at length Flavia happened to obſerve, that ſhe had lately been reading Petrarch's Sonnets, and was ſo much affected by the too juſt reflection of theſe lines,

" Che piu d'un giorno é la vita mortale
" Nubile, breve, freddo, & pien di noia
" Che puo bella parer, ma nulla vale?

that ſhe could not forbear immedi-

ately attempting to compriſe their general meaning in our language:

Life at the beſt is but a winter's day,
Short and o'ercaſt with clouds; or if a ray
Brightens the gloom, ah! ſoon it fades away.

At the recital of theſe verſes the younger members could no longer conceal their emotions. Eubulus, long enured to the afflictions of life, whoſe philoſophic and religious diſpoſition enabled him to bear them with reſignation, and whoſe benevolence diſpoſed him to alleviate the ſufferings of others, now indulged the young people in venting the effuſions of their hearts, and relieving themſelves by tears: he then adapted his diſcourſe to the profound melancholy of their minds; and at length endeavoured to raiſe their depreſſed ſpirits by calm and rational argument. "I cannot condemn you,

my dear young friends," he ſaid, "for dropping the tear of affection on the grave of our valuable friend. I join with you in recollecting her excellencies, and in dwelling upon them with peculiar delight; and I can never ceaſe to cheriſh her character, till I ceaſe to cheriſh the remembrance of departed virtue."

Notwithſtanding all the boaſted encomiums laviſhed upon the Stoics, by the profeſſors of that ſect, I cannot admire a philoſophy which affected a wiſdom ſuperior even to the feelings of humanity. They conſidered every emotion of the heart which diveſted the mind of its calm and ſteady compoſure, as unworthy of an exalted underſtanding, and below the dignity of human nature; and from this principle they revolted againſt every ſentiment of pity and compaſſion; they more

particularly inveighed againſt all lamentation for the death of a friend, both as vain and unneceſſary, and alſo as the token of an unbecoming weakneſs. Thus they ſtripped man of every natural affection, and defaced, with a clumſy hand, the beautiful picture of humanity.

All our paſſions are ſo nicely interwoven together, and ſo neceſſary either for our preſervation or our happineſs, that we cannot eradicate any particular feeling, without weakening and diſcompoſing the others. If therefore we are able ſo far to controul ourſelves as to bear the loſs of our departed friends without emotion, we ſhould be ſenſible alſo that this ſame compoſure would take away all the nicer feelings, and blunt the edge of our keeneſt ſatisfactions. The indulgence of melancholy, and what is called the 'luxury of grief,'

grief,' are infinitely pleaſing. A man of ſenſibility, cannot attempt to weigh his tears in the balance of rigid judgment; the moderation therefore of our grief depends upon the healing hand of time, which never fails to compoſe our afflictions, and to lull the ſenſes into an oblivion of our cares.

Amanda whom we now lament, was highly excellent in every department of life; amiable as a wife and mother, for that ſweetneſs and tenderneſs of diſpoſition, and all thoſe endearing qualities, thoſe ſofter virtues, which are the peculiar ornaments of the ſex; with an underſtanding, a generous and exalted way of thinking, a piety ſtrong and rational, and a moſt comprehenſive humanity, heightened by the ſuperior motives of duty and religion: we cannot fail therefore to feel the loſs of ſuch a character; yet

at

at the ſame time, while we allow ourſelves to lament, let us alſo draw all poſſible conſolations to our aid; let us endeavour to imitate Amanda, who not being above the tender feelings of humanity, did not give way too much to unavailing ſorrow. She ſupported herſelf under various afflictions with Chriſtian and uniform patience, and like gold purified in the fire, ſhe has riſen from the trial brighter than ever.

The ſeal is now ſet upon her character; ſhe died, it is true, at a time when we all regret her, for though ſhe was paſt the meridian of life, yet her mental powers were ſtill unimpaired; but ſhe was haſtening to that period when infirmities would have ſtolen imperceptibly over her frame, and debility would have ſucceeded to the energy of her mind. How much more would you then have lamented the loſs

of

of her faculties, than you now do the loſs of her life?

It is the office of Chriſtianity, and of true wiſdom, to turn our thoughts, upon all occaſions, from the dark to the brighter ſide of human life. The colour of that thread, which fabulous hiſtory repreſents the deſtinies to be employed in weaving and meaſuring out to every mortal, will always depend principally upon ourſelves. On this principle, it is no leſs our intereſt than our duty, to encourage that complacency of diſpoſition, which leads us to contemplate every event in the moſt favourable point of view: and indeed thoſe ſeveral ſubjects which Amanda introduced in her evening converſations, each of them tended, as ſo many lines to one common centre, to increaſe and improve the ſum of that portion of happineſs, deſigned for

us by Providence in this our ſublunary ſtation. We know alſo that Amanda conſidered death, not only as the inevitable, but the deſirable end of life; the ſure refuge from the troubles of this world, and the goal that leads to everlaſting happineſs. With the firmneſs of a Chriſtian ſhe yielded her lateſt breath, in full confidence that ſhe was under the protection of the great Diſpoſer of events. Let us alſo acquieſce in the diſpenſations of Providence, and conſole ourſelves by the reflection, that Amanda, whoſe heart ever expanded for the love of mankind, and whoſe actions correſponded with the dictates of her heart, will receive the reward of her virtue, and enjoy a happy immortality.

FINIS.

BRITISH 2 NO71 MUSEUM